★★ 811

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.
GIFT OF
D. L. Lezinsky, U.C.
Received May, 1892
Accessions No. 47897 Shelf No.

L32
1860

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA.

Not me —
The universal ego do I sing

S. F. Cal.
Beginning his 74th year
May 31, 1892.

Leaves of GRASS.

Boston.

Thayer and Eldridge,

Year 85 of The States.

(1860-61)

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860,
BY WALT WHITMAN,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PROTO-LEAF	5 *to* 22
WALT WHITMAN	23 — 104
CHANTS DEMOCRATIC and Native American *Numbers* 1 *to* 21	105 — 194
LEAVES OF GRASS *Numbers* 1 *to* 24	195 *to* 242
SALUT AU MONDE	243 — 258
POEM OF JOYS	259 — 268
A WORD OUT OF THE SEA	269 — 277
A Leaf of Faces	278 — 282
Europe, the 72d and 73d Years T. S.	283
ENFANS D'ADAM *Numbers* 1 *to* 15	287 *to* 314
POEM OF THE ROAD	315 — 328
TO THE SAYERS OF WORDS	329 — 336
A Boston Ballad, the 78th Year T. S.	337
CALAMUS *Numbers* 1 *to* 45	341 *to* 378
CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY	379 — 388
Longings for Home	389

MESSENGER LEAVES.

	PAGE
To You, Whoever You Are	391
To a foiled Revolter or Revoltress	394
To Him That was Crucified	397
To One Shortly To Die	398
To a Common Prostitute	399
To Rich Givers	399
To a Pupil	400
To The States, to Identify the 16th, 17th, or 18th Presidentiad	400
To a Cantatrice	401
Walt Whitman's Caution	401
To a President	402
To Other Lands	402
To Old Age	402
To You	403
To You	403

PAGE

Mannahatta 404

France, the 18th Year T. S. 406

THOUGHTS . . . . . *Numbers* . . 1 . . *to* . . 7 . . . . . 408 . . *to* . . 411

Unnamed Lands 412

Kosmos 414

A Hand Mirror 415

Beginners . . . . . Tests 416

Savantism . . . . . Perfections 417

Says 418

Debris 421

SLEEP-CHASINGS . . . . . 426 . . *to* . . 439

BURIAL 440 448

To My Soul 449

So long 451

OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA.

Proto-Leaf.

1. Free, fresh, savage,
Fluent, luxuriant, self-content, fond of persons and places,
Fond of fish-shape Paumanok, where I was born,
Fond of the sea — lusty-begotten and various,
Boy of the Mannahatta, the city of ships, my city,
Or raised inland, or of the south savannas,
Or full-breath'd on Californian air, or Texan or Cuban air,
Tallying, vocalizing all — resounding Niagara — resounding Missouri,
Or rude in my home in Kanuck woods,
Or wandering and hunting, my drink water, my diet meat,
Or withdrawn to muse and meditate in some deep recess,
Far from the clank of crowds, an interval passing, rapt and happy,
Stars, vapor, snow, the hills, rocks, the Fifth Month flowers, my amaze, my love,

Aware of the buffalo, the peace-herds, the bull, strong-breasted and hairy,
Aware of the mocking-bird of the wilds at day-break,
Solitary, singing in the west, I strike up for a new world.

2. Victory, union, faith, identity, time, the Soul, yourself, the present and future lands, the indissoluble compacts, riches, mystery, eternal progress, the kosmos, and the modern reports.

3. This then is life,
Here is what has come to the surface after so many throes and convulsions.

4. How curious! How real!
Underfoot the divine soil — Overhead the sun.

5. See, revolving,
The globe — the ancestor-continents, away, grouped together,
The present and future continents, north and south, with the isthmus between.

6. See, vast, trackless spaces,
As in a dream, they change, they swiftly fill,
Countless masses debouch upon them,
They are now covered with the foremost people, arts, institutions known.

7. See projected, through time,
For me, an audience interminable.

8. With firm and regular step they wend — they never stop,
Successions of men, Americanos, a hundred millions,
One generation playing its part and passing on,
And another generation playing its part and passing on in its turn,
With faces turned sideways or backward toward me to listen,
With eyes retrospective toward me.

9. Americanos! Masters!
Marches humanitarian! Foremost!
Century marches! Libertad! Masses!
For you a programme of chants.

10. Chants of the prairies,
Chants of the long-running Mississippi,
Chants of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota,
Inland chants — chants of Kanzas,
Chants away down to Mexico, and up north to Oregon — Kanadian chants,
Chants of teeming and turbulent cities — chants of mechanics,
Yankee chants — Pennsylvanian chants — chants of Kentucky and Tennessee,
Chants of dim-lit mines — chants of mountain-tops,
Chants of sailors — chants of the Eastern Sea and the Western Sea,
Chants of the Mannahatta, the place of my dearest love, the place surrounded by hurried and sparkling currents,
Health chants — joy chants — robust chants of young men,

Chants inclusive — wide reverberating chants,
Chants of the Many In One.

11. In the Year 80 of The States,
My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this soil, this air,
Born here of parents born here,
From parents the same, and their parents' parents the same,
I, now thirty-six years old, in perfect health, begin,
Hoping to cease not till death.

12. Creeds and schools in abeyance,
Retiring back a while, sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten,
With accumulations, now coming forward in front,
Arrived again, I harbor, for good or bad — I permit to speak,
Nature, without check, with original energy.

13. Take my leaves, America!
Make welcome for them everywhere, for they are your own offspring;
Surround them, East and West! for they would surround you,
And you precedents! connect lovingly with them, for they connect lovingly with you.

14. I conned old times,
I sat studying at the feet of the great masters;
Now, if eligible, O that the great masters might return and study me!

15. In the name of These States, shall I scorn the antique?
Why These are the children of the antique, to justify it.

16. Dead poets, philosophs, priests,
Martyrs, artists, inventors, governments long since,
Language-shapers, on other shores,
Nations once powerful, now reduced, withdrawn, or desolate,
I dare not proceed till I respectfully credit what you have left, wafted hither,
I have perused it — I own it is admirable,
I think nothing can ever be greater — Nothing can ever deserve more than it deserves;
I regard it all intently a long while,
Then take my place for good with my own day and race here.

17. Here lands female and male,
Here the heirship and heiress-ship of the world — Here the flame of materials,
Here Spirituality, the translatress, the openly-avowed,
The ever-tending, the finale of visible forms,
The satisfier, after due long-waiting, now advancing,
Yes, here comes the mistress, the Soul.

18. The SOUL!
Forever and forever — Longer than soil is brown and solid — Longer than water ebbs and flows.

19. I will make the poems of materials, for I think they are to be the most spiritual poems,

And I will make the poems of my body and of mortality,
For I think I shall then supply myself with the poems of my Soul and of immortality.

20. I will make a song for These States, that no one State may under any circumstances be subjected to another State,
And I will make a song that there shall be comity by day and by night between all The States, and between any two of them,
And I will make a song of the organic bargains of These States — And a shrill song of curses on him who would dissever the Union;
And I will make a song for the ears of the President, full of weapons with menacing points,
And behind the weapons countless dissatisfied faces.

21. I will acknowledge contemporary lands,
I will trail the whole geography of the globe, and salute courteously every city large and small;
And employments! I will put in my poems, that with you is heroism, upon land and sea — And I will report all heroism from an American point of view;
And sexual organs and acts! do you concentrate in me — For I am determined to tell you with courageous clear voice, to prove you illustrious.

22. I will sing the song of companionship,
I will show what alone must compact These,
I believe These are to found their own ideal of manly love, indicating it in me;

I will therefore let flame from me the burning fires that were threatening to consume me,
I will lift what has too long kept down those smouldering fires,
I will give them complete abandonment,
I will write the evangel-poem of comrades and of love,
(For who but I should understand love, with all its sorrow and joy?
And who but I should be the poet of comrades?)

23. I am the credulous man of qualities, ages, races,
I advance from the people en-masse in their own spirit,
Here is what sings unrestricted faith.

24. Omnes! Omnes!
Let others ignore what they may,
I make the poem of evil also — I commemorate that part also,
I am myself just as much evil as good — And I say there is in fact no evil,
Or if there is, I say it is just as important to you, to the earth, or to me, as anything else.

25. I too, following many, and followed by many, inaugurate a Religion — I too go to the wars,
It may be I am destined to utter the loudest cries thereof, the conqueror's shouts,
They may rise from me yet, and soar above every thing.

26. Each is not for its own sake,
I say the whole earth, and all the stars in the sky, are for Religion's sake.

27. I say no man has ever been half devout enough,
None has ever adored or worship'd half enough,
None has begun to think how divine he himself is, and how certain the future is.

28. I specifically announce that the real and permanent grandeur of These States must be their Religion,
Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur.

29. What are you doing, young man?
Are you so earnest — so given up to literature, science, art, amours?
These ostensible realities, materials, points?
Your ambition or business, whatever it may be?

30. It is well — Against such I say not a word — I am their poet also;
But behold! such swiftly subside — burnt up for Religion's sake,
For not all matter is fuel to heat, impalpable flame, the essential life of the earth,
Any more than such are to Religion.

31. What do you seek, so pensive and silent?
What do you need, comrade?
Mon cher! do you think it is love?

32. Proceed, comrade,
It is a painful thing to love a man or woman to excess — yet it satisfies — it is great,
But there is something else very great — it makes the whole coincide,

It, magnificent, beyond materials, with continuous hands, sweeps and provides for all.

33. O I see the following poems are indeed to drop in the earth the germs of a greater Religion.

34. My comrade!
For you, to share with me, two greatnesses — And a third one, rising inclusive and more resplendent,
The greatness of Love and Democracy — and the greatness of Religion.

35. Melange mine!
Mysterious ocean where the streams empty,
Prophetic spirit of materials shifting and flickering around me,
Wondrous interplay between the seen and unseen,
Living beings, identities, now doubtless near us, in the air, that we know not of,
Extasy everywhere touching and thrilling me,
Contact daily and hourly that will not release me,
These selecting — These, in hints, demanded of me.

36. Not he, adhesive, kissing me so long with his daily kiss,
Has winded and twisted around me that which holds me to him,
Any more than I am held to the heavens, to the spiritual world,
And to the identities of the Gods, my unknown lovers,
After what they have done to me, suggesting such themes.

37. O such themes! Equalities!
O amazement of things! O divine average!
O warblings under the sun — ushered, as now, or at noon, or setting!
O strain, musical, flowing through ages — now reaching hither,
I take to your reckless and composite chords — I add to them, and cheerfully pass them forward.

38. As I have walked in Alabama my morning walk,
I have seen where the she-bird, the mocking-bird, sat on her nest in the briers, hatching her brood.

39. I have seen the he-bird also,
I have paused to hear him, near at hand, inflating his throat, and joyfully singing.

40. And while I paused, it came to me that what he really sang for was not there only,
Nor for his mate nor himself only, nor all sent back by the echoes,
But subtle, clandestine, away beyond,
A charge transmitted, and gift occult, for those being born.

41. Democracy!
Near at hand to you a throat is now inflating itself and joyfully singing.

42. Ma femme!
For the brood beyond us and of us,
For those who belong here, and those to come,

I, exultant, to be ready for them, will now shake out carols stronger and haughtier than have ever yet been heard upon the earth.

43. I will make the songs of passions, to give them their way,
And your songs, offenders — for I scan you with kindred eyes, and carry you with me the same as any.

44. I will make the true poem of riches,
Namely, to earn for the body and the mind, what adheres, and goes forward, and is not dropt by death.

45. I will effuse egotism, and show it underlying all — And I will be the bard of Personality;
And I will show of male and female that either is but the equal of the other,
And I will show that there is no imperfection in male or female, or in the earth, or in the present — and can be none in the future,
And I will show that whatever happens to anybody, it may be turned to beautiful results — And I will show that nothing can happen more beautiful than death;
And I will thread a thread through my poems that no one thing in the universe is inferior to another thing,
And that all the things of the universe are perfect miracles, each as profound as any.

46. I will not make poems with reference to parts,
But I will make leaves, poems, poemets, songs, says, thoughts, with reference to ensemble;
And I will not sing with reference to a day, but with reference to all days,
And I will not make a poem, nor the least part of a poem, but has reference to the Soul,
Because, having looked at the objects of the universe, I find there is no one, nor any particle of one, but has reference to the Soul.

47. Was somebody asking to see the Soul?
See! your own shape and countenance — persons, substances, beasts, the trees, the running rivers, the rocks and sands.

48. All hold spiritual joys, and afterward loosen them,
How can the real body ever die, and be buried?

49. Of your real body, and any man's or woman's real body, item for item, it will elude the hands of the corpse-cleaners, and pass to fitting spheres, carrying what has accrued to it from the moment of birth to the moment of death.

50. Not the types set up by the printer return their impression, the meaning, the main concern, any more than a man's substance and life, or a woman's substance and life, return in the body and the Soul, indifferently before death and after death.

51. Behold! the body includes and is the meaning, the main concern — and includes and is the Soul;
Whoever you are! how superb and how divine is your body, or any part of it.

52. Whoever you are! to you endless announcements.

53. Daughter of the lands, did you wait for your poet?
Did you wait for one with a flowing mouth and indicative hand?

54. Toward the male of The States, and toward the female of The States,
Toward the President, the Congress, the diverse Governors, the new Judiciary,
Live words — words to the lands.

55. O the lands!
Lands scorning invaders! Interlinked, food-yielding lands!
Land of coal and iron! Land of gold! Lands of cotton, sugar, rice!
Odorous and sunny land! Floridian land!
Land of the spinal river, the Mississippi! Land of the Alleghanies! Ohio's land!
Land of wheat, beef, pork! Land of wool and hemp! Land of the potato, the apple, and the grape!
Land of the pastoral plains, the grass-fields of the world! Land of those sweet-aired interminable plateaus! Land there of the herd, the garden, the healthy house of adobie! Land there of rapt thought, and of the realization of the stars! Land of simple, holy, untamed lives!

Lands where the northwest Columbia winds, and where the southwest Colorado winds!
Land of the Chesapeake! Land of the Delaware!
Land of Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan!
Land of the Old Thirteen! Massachusetts land! Land of Vermont and Connecticut!
Land of many oceans! Land of sierras and peaks!
Land of boatmen and sailors! Fishermen's land!
Inextricable lands! the clutched together! the passionate lovers!
The side by side! the elder and younger brothers! the bony-limbed!
The great women's land! the feminine! the experienced sisters and the inexperienced sisters!
Far breath'd land! Arctic braced! Mexican breezed! the diverse! the compact!
The Pennsylvanian! the Virginian! the double Carolinian!
O all and each well-loved by me! my intrepid nations! O I cannot be discharged from you!
O Death! O for all that, I am yet of you, unseen, this hour, with irrepressible love,
Walking New England, a friend, a traveller,
Splashing my bare feet in the edge of the summer ripples, on Paumanok's sands,
Crossing the prairies — dwelling again in Chicago — dwelling in many towns,
Observing shows, births, improvements, structures, arts,
Listening to the orators and the oratresses in public halls,
Of and through The States, as during life — each man and woman my neighbor,

The Louisianian, the Georgian, as near to me, and I as near to him and her,
The Mississippian and Arkansian — the woman and man of Utah, Dakotah, Nebraska, yet with me — and I yet with any of them,
Yet upon the plains west of the spinal river — yet in my house of adobie,
Yet returning eastward — yet in the Sea-Side State, or in Maryland,
Yet a child of the North — yet Kanadian, cheerily braving the winter — the snow and ice welcome to me,
Yet a true son either of Maine, or of the Granite State, or of the Narragansett Bay State, or of the Empire State,
Yet sailing to other shores to annex the same — yet welcoming every new brother,
Hereby applying these leaves to the new ones, from the hour they unite with the old ones,
Coming among the new ones myself, to be their companion — coming personally to you now,
Enjoining you to acts, characters, spectacles, with me.

56. With me, with firm holding — yet haste, haste on.

57. For your life, adhere to me,
Of all the men of the earth, I only can unloose you and toughen you,
I may have to be persuaded many times before I consent to give myself to you — but what of that?
Must not Nature be persuaded many times?

58. No dainty dolce affettuoso I;
Bearded, sunburnt, gray-necked, forbidding, I have arrived,
To be wrestled with as I pass, for the solid prizes of the universe,
For such I afford whoever can persevere to win them.

59. On my way a moment I pause,
Here for you! And here for America!
Still the Present I raise aloft — Still the Future of The States I harbinge, glad and sublime,
And for the Past I pronounce what the air holds of the red aborigines.

60. The red aborigines!
Leaving natural breaths, sounds of rain and winds, calls as of birds and animals in the woods, syllabled to us for names,
Okonee, Koosa, Ottawa, Monongahela, Sauk, Natchez, Chattahoochee, Kaqueta, Oronoco.
Wabash, Miami, Saginaw, Chippewa, Oshkosh, Walla-Walla,
Leaving such to The States, they melt, they depart, charging the water and the land with names.

61. O expanding and swift! O henceforth,
Elements, breeds, adjustments, turbulent, quick, and audacious,
A world primal again — Vistas of glory, incessant and branching,
A new race, dominating previous ones, and grander far,
New politics — New literatures and religions — New inventions and arts.

62. These! These, my voice announcing — I will sleep
no more, but arise;
You oceans that have been calm within me! how
I feel you, fathomless, stirring, preparing
unprecedented waves and storms.

63. See! steamers steaming through my poems!
See, in my poems immigrants continually coming
and landing;
See, in arriere, the wigwam, the trail, the hunter's
hut, the flat-boat, the maize-leaf, the claim, the
rude fence, and the backwoods village;
See, on the one side the Western Sea, and on the
other side the Eastern Sea, how they advance
and retreat upon my poems, as upon their own
shores;
See, pastures and forests in my poems — See, animals,
wild and tame — See, beyond the Kanzas, count-
less herds of buffalo, feeding on short curly
grass;
See, in my poems, old and new cities, solid, vast,
inland, with paved streets, with iron and stone
edifices, and ceaseless vehicles, and commerce;
See the populace, millions upon millions, handsome,
tall, muscular, both sexes, clothed in easy and
dignified clothes — teaching, commanding, mar-
rying, generating, equally electing and elective;
See, the many-cylinder'd steam printing-press — See,
the electric telegraph — See, the strong and
quick locomotive, as it departs, panting, blowing
the steam-whistle;
See, ploughmen, ploughing farms — See, miners,
digging mines — See, the numberless factories;

See, mechanics, busy at their benches, with tools — See from among them, superior judges, philosophs, Presidents, emerge, dressed in working dresses;
See, lounging through the shops and fields of The States, me, well-beloved, close-held by day and night,
Hear the loud echo of my songs there! Read the hints come at last.

64. O my comrade!
O you and me at last — and us two only;
O power, liberty, eternity at last!
O to be relieved of distinctions! to make as much of vices as virtues!
O to level occupations and the sexes! O to bring all to common ground! O adhesiveness!
O the pensive aching to be together — you know not why, and I know not why.

65. O a word to clear one's path ahead endlessly!
O something extatic and undemonstrable! O music wild!
O now I triumph — and you shall also;
O hand in hand — O wholesome pleasure — O one more desirer and lover,
O haste, firm holding — haste, haste on, with me.

WALT WHITMAN.

1. I CELEBRATE myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me, as good belongs to you.

2. I loafe and invite my Soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease, observing a spear of summer grass.

3. Houses and rooms are full of perfumes — the shelves are crowded with perfumes,
I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it and like it,
The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

4. The atmosphere is not a perfume — it has no taste of the distillation, it is odorless,
It is for my mouth forever — I am in love with it,
I will go to the bank by the wood, and become undisguised and naked,
I am mad for it to be in contact with me.

5. The smoke of my own breath,
Echoes, ripples, buzzed whispers, love-root, silk-thread, crotch and vine,
My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, the passing of blood and air through my lungs,
The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore, and dark-colored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn,
The sound of the belched words of my voice, words loosed to the eddies of the wind,
A few light kisses, a few embraces, a reaching around of arms,
The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,
The delight alone, or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hill-sides,
The feeling of health, the full-noon trill, the song of me rising from bed and meeting the sun.

6. Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? Have you reckoned the earth much?
Have you practised so long to learn to read?
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

7. Stop this day and night with me, and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun — there are millions of suns left,
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,

You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
You shall listen to all sides, and filter them from yourself.

8. I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the beginning and the end,
But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

9. There was never any more inception than there is now,
Nor any more youth or age than there is now,
And will never be any more perfection than there is now,
Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now.

10. Urge, and urge, and urge,
Always the procreant urge of the world.

11. Out of the dimness opposite equals advance — always substance and increase, always sex,
Always a knit of identity — always distinction — always a breed of life.

12. To elaborate is no avail — learned and unlearned feel that it is so.

13. Sure as the most certain sure, plumb in the uprights, well entretied, braced in the beams,
Stout as a horse, affectionate, haughty, electrical,
I and this mystery here we stand.

14. Clear and sweet is my Soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my Soul.

15. Lack one lacks both, and the unseen is proved by the seen,
Till that becomes unseen, and receives proof in its turn.

16. Showing the best, and dividing it from the worst, age vexes age,
Knowing the perfect fitness and equanimity of things, while they discuss I am silent, and go bathe and admire myself.

17. Welcome is every organ and attribute of me, and of any man hearty and clean,
Not an inch, nor a particle of an inch, is vile, and none shall be less familiar than the rest.

18. I am satisfied — I see, dance, laugh, sing;
As the hugging and loving Bed-fellow sleeps at my side through the night, and withdraws at the peep of the day,
And leaves for me baskets covered with white towels, swelling the house with their plenty,
Shall I postpone my acceptation and realization, and scream at my eyes,
That they turn from gazing after and down the road,
And forthwith cipher and show me to a cent,
Exactly the contents of one, and exactly the contents of two, and which is ahead?

19. Trippers and askers surround me,
People I meet — the effect upon me of my early life, or the ward and city I live in, or the nation,

The latest news, discoveries, inventions, societies, authors old and new,
My dinner, dress, associates, looks, work, compliments, dues,
The real or fancied indifference of some man or woman I love,
The sickness of one of my folks, or of myself, or ill-doing, or loss or lack of money, or depressions or exaltations,
These come to me days and nights, and go from me again,
But they are not the Me myself.

20. Apart from the pulling and hauling stands what I am,
Stands amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary,
Looks down, is erect, or bends an arm on an impalpable certain rest,
Looking with side-curved head, curious what will come next,
Both in and out of the game, and watching and wondering at it.

21. Backward I see in my own days where I sweated through fog with linguists and contenders,
I have no mockings or arguments — I witness and wait.

22. I believe in you, my Soul — the other I am must not abase itself to you,
And you must not be abased to the other.

23. Loafe with me on the grass — loose the stop from your throat,

Not words, not music or rhyme I want — not custom or lecture, not even the best,
Only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice.

24. I mind how once we lay, such a transparent summer morning,
How you settled your head athwart my hips, and gently turned over upon me,
And parted the shirt from my bosom-bone, and plunged your tongue to my bare-stript heart,
And reached till you felt my beard, and reached till you held my feet.

25. Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and joy and knowledge that pass all the art and argument of the earth,
And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,
And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,
And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers,
And that a kelson of the creation is love,
And limitless are leaves, stiff or drooping in the fields,
And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,
And mossy scabs of the worm-fence, and heaped stones, elder, mullen, and pokeweed.

26. A child said, *What is the grass?* fetching it to me with full hands;
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is, any more than he.

27. I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

28. Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrancer, designedly dropped,
Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark, and say *Whose?*

29. Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.

30. Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,
Growing among black folks as among white,
Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.

31. And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

32. Tenderly will I use you, curling grass,
It may be you transpire from the breasts of young men,
It may be if I had known them I would have loved them,
It may be you are from old people, and from women, and from offspring taken soon out of their mothers' laps,
And here you are the mothers' laps.

33. This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old mothers,
Darker than the colorless beards of old men,

Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.

34. O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues!
And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of mouths for nothing.

35. I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young men and women,
And the hints about old men and mothers, and the offspring taken soon out of their laps.

36. What do you think has become of the young and old men?
And what do you think has become of the women and children?

37. They are alive and well somewhere,
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,
And if ever there was, it led forward life, and does not wait at the end to arrest it,
And ceased the moment life appeared.

38. All goes onward and outward — nothing collapses,
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

39. Has any one supposed it lucky to be born?
I hasten to inform him or her, it is just as lucky to die, and I know it.

40. I pass death with the dying, and birth with the new-washed babe, and am not contained between my hat and boots,

And peruse manifold objects, no two alike, and every one good,
The earth good, and the stars good, and their adjuncts all good.

41. I am not an earth, nor an adjunct of an earth,
I am the mate and companion of people, all just as immortal and fathomless as myself;
They do not know how immortal, but I know.

42. Every kind for itself and its own — for me mine, male and female,
For me those that have been boys, and that love women,
For me the man that is proud, and feels how it stings to be slighted,
For me the sweetheart and the old maid — for me mothers, and the mothers of mothers,
For me lips that have smiled, eyes that have shed tears,
For me children, and the begetters of children.

43. Who need be afraid of the merge?
Undrape! you are not guilty to me, nor stale, nor discarded,
I see through the broadcloth and gingham, whether or no,
And am around, tenacious, acquisitive, tireless, and can never be shaken away.

44. The little one sleeps in its cradle,
I lift the gauze and look a long time, and silently brush away flies with my hand.

45. The youngster and the red-faced girl turn aside up the bushy hill,
I peeringly view them from the top.

46. The suicide sprawls on the bloody floor of the bedroom;
It is so — I witnessed the corpse — there the pistol had fallen.

47. The blab of the pave, the tires of carts, sluff of boot-soles, talk of the promenaders,
The heavy omnibus, the driver with his interrogating thumb, the clank of the shod horses on the granite floor,
The snow-sleighs, the clinking, shouted jokes, pelts of snow-balls,
The hurrahs for popular favorites, the fury of roused mobs,
The flap of the curtained litter, a sick man inside, borne to the hospital,
The meeting of enemies, the sudden oath, the blows and fall,
The excited crowd, the policeman with his star, quickly working his passage to the centre of the crowd,
The impassive stones that receive and return so many echoes,
The Souls moving along — (are they invisible, while the least of the stones is visible?)
What groans of over-fed or half-starved who fall sunstruck, or in fits,
What exclamations of women taken suddenly, who hurry home and give birth to babes,

What living and buried speech is always vibrating here — what howls restrained by decorum,
Arrests of criminals, slights, adulterous offers made, acceptances, rejections with convex lips,
I mind them or the show or resonance of them — I come and I depart.

48. The big doors of the country-barn stand open and ready,
The dried grass of the harvest-time loads the slow-drawn wagon,
The clear light plays on the brown gray and green intertinged,
The armfuls are packed to the sagging mow.

49. I am there — I help — I came stretched atop of the load,
I felt its soft jolts — one leg reclined on the other;
I jump from the cross-beams and seize the clover and timothy,
And roll head over heels, and tangle my hair full of wisps.

50. Alone, far in the wilds and mountains, I hunt,
Wandering, amazed at my own lightness and glee,
In the late afternoon choosing a safe spot to pass the night,
Kindling a fire and broiling the fresh-killed game,
Soundly falling asleep on the gathered leaves, with my dog and gun by my side.

51. The Yankee clipper is under her three sky-sails — she cuts the sparkle and scud,

LIBRARY OF THE

My eyes settle the land — I bend at her prow, or shout joyously from the deck.

52. The boatmen and clam-diggers arose early and stopped for me,
I tucked my trowser-ends in my boots, and went and had a good time;
You should have been with us that day round the chowder-kettle.

53. I saw the marriage of the trapper in the open air in the far-west — the bride was a red girl,
Her father and his friends sat near, cross-legged and dumbly smoking — they had moccasons to their feet, and large thick blankets hanging from their shoulders;
On a bank lounged the trapper — he was dressed mostly in skins — his luxuriant beard and curls protected his neck,
One hand rested on his rifle — the other hand held firmly the wrist of the red girl,
She had long eyelashes — her head was bare — her coarse straight locks descended upon her voluptuous limbs and reached to her feet.

54. The runaway slave came to my house and stopped outside,
I heard his motions crackling the twigs of the woodpile,
Through the swung half-door of the kitchen I saw him limpsy and weak,
And went where he sat on a log, and led him in and assured him,

And brought water, and filled a tub for his sweated body and bruised feet,
And gave him a room that entered from my own, and gave him some coarse clean clothes,
And remember perfectly well his revolving eyes and his awkwardness,
And remember putting plasters on the galls of his neck and ankles;
He staid with me a week before he was recuperated and passed north,
I had him sit next me at table — my fire-lock leaned in the corner.

55. Twenty-eight young men bathe by the shore,
Twenty-eight young men, and all so friendly;
Twenty-eight years of womanly life, and all so lonesome.

56. She owns the fine house by the rise of the bank,
She hides, handsome and richly drest, aft the blinds of the window.

57. Which of the young men does she like the best?
Ah, the homeliest of them is beautiful to her.

58. Where are you off to, lady? for I see you,
You splash in the water there, yet stay stock still in your room.

59. Dancing and laughing along the beach came the twenty-ninth bather,
The rest did not see her, but she saw them and loved them.

60. The beards of the young men glistened with wet, it ran from their long hair,
Little streams passed all over their bodies.

61. An unseen hand also passed over their bodies,
It descended tremblingly from their temples and ribs.

62. The young men float on their backs — their white bellies bulge to the sun — they do not ask who seizes fast to them,
They do not know who puffs and declines with pendant and bending arch,
They do not think whom they souse with spray.

63. The butcher-boy puts off his killing-clothes, or sharpens his knife at the stall in the market,
I loiter, enjoying his repartee and his shuffle and break-down.

64. Blacksmiths with grimed and hairy chests environ the anvil,
Each has his main-sledge — they are all out — there is a great heat in the fire.

65. From the cinder-strewed threshold I follow their movements,
The lithe sheer of their waists plays even with their massive arms,
Overhand the hammers roll — overhand so slow — overhand so sure,
They do not hasten — each man hits in his place.

66. The negro holds firmly the reins of his four horses — the blocks swags underneath on its tied-over chain,
The negro that drives the huge dray of the stone-yard — steady and tall he stands, poised on one leg on the string-piece,
His blue shirt exposes his ample neck and breast, and loosens over his hip-band,
His glance is calm and commanding — he tosses the slouch of his hat away from his forehead,
The sun falls on his crispy hair and moustache — falls on the black of his polished and perfect limbs.

67. I behold the picturesque giant and love him — and I do not stop there,
I go with the team also.

68. In me the caresser of life wherever moving — backward as well as forward slueing,
To niches aside and junior bending.

69. Oxen that rattle the yoke or halt in the shade! what is that you express in your eyes?
It seems to me more than all the print I have read in my life.

70. My tread scares the wood-drake and wood-duck, on my distant and day-long ramble,
They rise together — they slowly circle around.

71. I believe in those winged purposes,
And acknowledge red, yellow, white, playing within me,

And consider green and violet, and the tufted crown, intentional,
And do not call the tortoise unworthy because she is not something else,
And the mocking-bird in the swamp never studied the gamut, yet trills pretty well to me,
And the look of the bay mare shames silliness out of me.

72. The wild gander leads his flock through the cool night,
Ya-honk! he says, and sounds it down to me like an invitation;
The pert may suppose it meaningless, but I listen close,
I find its purpose and place up there toward the wintry sky.

73. The sharp-hoofed moose of the north, the cat on the house-sill, the chickadee, the prairie-dog,
The litter of the grunting sow as they tug at her teats,
The brood of the turkey-hen, and she with her half-spread wings,
I see in them and myself the same old law.

74. The press of my foot to the earth springs a hundred affections,
They scorn the best I can do to relate them.

75. I am enamoured of growing outdoors,
Of men that live among cattle, or taste of the ocean or woods,

Of the builders and steerers of ships, and the wielders of axes and mauls, and the drivers of horses,
I can eat and sleep with them week in and week out.

76. What is commonest, cheapest, nearest, easiest, is Me,
Me going in for my chances, spending for vast returns,
Adorning myself to bestow myself on the first that will take me,
Not asking the sky to come down to my good will,
Scattering it freely forever.

77. The pure contralto sings in the organ loft,
The carpenter dresses his plank — the tongue of his foreplane whistles its wild ascending lisp,
The married and unmarried children ride home to their Thanksgiving dinner,
The pilot seizes the king-pin — he heaves down with a strong arm,
The mate stands braced in the whale-boat — lance and harpoon are ready,
The duck-shooter walks by silent and cautious stretches,
The deacons are ordained with crossed hands at the altar,
The spinning-girl retreats and advances to the hum of the big wheel,
The farmer stops by the bars, as he walks on a First Day loafe, and looks at the oats and rye,
The lunatic is carried at last to the asylum, a confirmed case,
He will never sleep any more as he did in the cot in his mother's bedroom;

The jour printer with gray head and gaunt jaws
works at his case,
He turns his quid of tobacco, while his eyes blurr
with the manuscript;
The malformed limbs are tied to the anatomist's
table,
What is removed drops horribly in a pail;
The quadroon girl is sold at the stand — the drunkard
nods by the bar-room stove,
The machinist rolls up his sleeves — the policeman
travels his beat — the gate-keeper marks who
pass,
The young fellow drives the express-wagon — I love
him, though I do not know him,
The half-breed straps on his light boots to compete
in the race,
The western turkey-shooting draws old and young —
some lean on their rifles, some sit on logs,
Out from the crowd steps the marksman, takes his
position, levels his piece;
The groups of newly-come emigrants cover the wharf
or levee,
As the woolly-pates hoe in the sugar-field, the over-
seer views them from his saddle,
The bugle calls in the ball-room, the gentlemen run
for their partners, the dancers bow to each other,
The youth lies awake in the cedar-roofed garret, and
harks to the musical rain,
The Wolverine sets traps on the creek that helps fill
the Huron,
The reformer ascends the platform, he spouts with
his mouth and nose,

The company returns from its excursion, the darkey brings up the rear and bears the well-riddled target,

The squaw, wrapt in her yellow-hemmed cloth, is offering moccasons and bead-bags for sale,

The connoisseur peers along the exhibition-gallery with half-shut eyes bent side-ways,

As the deck-hands make fast the steamboat, the plank is thrown for the shore-going passengers,

The young sister holds out the skein, while the elder sister winds it off in a ball, and stops now and then for the knots,

The one-year wife is recovering and happy, having a week ago borne her first child,

The clean-haired Yankee girl works with her sewing-machine, or in the factory or mill,

The nine months' gone is in the parturition chamber, her faintness and pains are advancing,

The paving-man leans on his two-handed rammer — the reporter's lead flies swiftly over the note-book — the sign-painter is lettering with red and gold,

The canal-boy trots on the tow-path — the bookkeeper counts at his desk — the shoemaker waxes his thread,

The conductor beats time for the band, and all the performers follow him,

The child is baptized — the convert is making his first professions,

The regatta is spread on the bay — how the white sails sparkle!

The drover, watching his drove, sings out to them that would stray,

The pedler sweats with his pack on his back, the purchaser higgling about the odd cent,
The camera and plate are prepared, the lady must sit for her daguerreotype,
The bride unrumples her white dress, the minute-hand of the clock moves slowly,
The opium-eater reclines with rigid head and just-opened lips,
The prostitute draggles her shawl, her bonnet bobs on her tipsy and pimpled neck,
The crowd laugh at her blackguard oaths, the men jeer and wink to each other,
(Miserable! I do not laugh at your oaths, nor jeer you;)
The President, holding a cabinet council, is surrounded by the Great Secretaries,
On the piazza walk five friendly matrons with twined arms,
The crew of the fish-smack pack repeated layers of halibut in the hold,
The Missourian crosses the plains, toting his wares and his cattle,
As the fare-collector goes through the train, he gives notice by the jingling of loose change,
The floor-men are laying the floor — the tinners are tinning the roof — the masons are calling for mortar,
In single file, each shouldering his hod, pass onward the laborers,
Seasons pursuing each other, the indescribable crowd is gathered — it is the Fourth of Seventh Month — What salutes of cannon and small arms!

Seasons pursuing each other, the plougher ploughs, the mower mows, and the winter-grain falls in the ground,
Off on the lakes the pike-fisher watches and waits by the hole in the frozen surface,
The stumps stand thick round the clearing, the squatter strikes deep with his axe,
Flatboatmen make fast, towards dusk, near the cotton-wood or pekan-trees,
Coon-seekers go through the regions of the Red river, or through those drained by the Tennessee, or through those of the Arkansaw,
Torches shine in the dark that hangs on the Chatta-hooche or Altamahaw,
Patriarchs sit at supper with sons and grandsons and great-grandsons around them,
In walls of adobie, in canvas tents, rest hunters and trappers after their day's sport,
The city sleeps and the country sleeps,
The living sleep for their time, the dead sleep for their time,
The old husband sleeps by his wife, and the young husband sleeps by his wife;
And these one and all tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them,
And such as it is to be of these, more or less, I am.

78. I am of old and young, of the foolish as much as the wise,
Regardless of others, ever regardful of others,
Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man,
Stuffed with the stuff that is coarse, and stuffed with the stuff that is fine,

One of the great nation, the nation of many nations, the smallest the same, and the largest the same,
A southerner soon as a northerner, a planter nonchalant and hospitable,
A Yankee, bound my own way, ready for trade, my joints the limberest joints on earth and the sternest joints on earth,
A Kentuckian, walking the vale of the Elkhorn in my deer-skin leggings,
A boatman over lakes or bays, or along coasts — a Hoosier, Badger, Buckeye,
A Louisianian or Georgian — a Poke-easy from sand-hills and pines,
At home on Kanadian snow-shoes, or up in the bush, or with fishermen off Newfoundland,
At home in the fleet of ice-boats, sailing with the rest, and tacking,
At home on the hills of Vermont, or in the woods of Maine, or the Texan ranch,
Comrade of Californians — comrade of free north-westerners, and loving their big proportions,
Comrade of raftsmen and coalmen — comrade of all who shake hands and welcome to drink and meat,
A learner with the simplest, a teacher of the thoughtfullest,
A novice beginning, yet experient of myriads of seasons,
Of every hue, trade, rank, caste and religion,
Not merely of the New World, but of Africa, Europe, Asia — a wandering savage,
A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, lover, quaker,

A prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.

79. I resist anything better than my own diversity,
And breathe the air, and leave plenty after me,
And am not stuck up, and am in my place.

80. The moth and the fish-eggs are in their place,
The suns I see, and the suns I cannot see, are in their place,
The palpable is in its place, and the impalpable is in its place.

81. These are the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands — they are not original with me,
If they are not yours as much as mine, they are nothing, or next to nothing,
If they do not enclose everything, they are next to nothing,
If they are not the riddle and the untying of the riddle, they are nothing,
If they are not just as close as they are distant, they are nothing.

82. This is the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is,
This is the common air that bathes the globe.

83. This is the breath for America, because it is my breath,
This is for laws, songs, behavior,
This is the tasteless water of Souls — this is the true sustenance.

84. This is for the illiterate, and for the judges of the Supreme Court, and for the Federal capitol and the State capitols,
And for the admirable communes of literats, composers, singers, lecturers, engineers, and savans,
And for the endless races of work-people, farmers, and seamen.

85. This is the trilling of thousands of clear cornets, screaming of octave flutes, striking of triangles.

86. I play not here marches for victors only — I play great marches for conquered and slain persons.

87. Have you heard that it was good to gain the day?
I also say it is good to fall — battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won.

88. I beat triumphal drums for the dead,
I blow through my embouchures my loudest and gayest music to them.

89. Vivas to those who have failed!
And to those whose war-vessels sank in the sea!
And those themselves who sank in the sea!
And to all generals that lost engagements! and all overcome heroes!
And the numberless unknown heroes, equal to the greatest heroes known.

90. This is the meal pleasantly set — this is the meat and drink for natural hunger,
It is for the wicked just the same as the righteous — I make appointments with all,

I will not have a single person slighted or left away,
The kept-woman, sponger, thief, are hereby invited,
The heavy-lipped slave is invited — the venerealee is invited,
There shall be no difference between them and the rest.

91. This is the press of a bashful hand — this is the float and odor of hair,
This is the touch of my lips to yours — this is the murmur of yearning,
This is the far-off depth and height reflecting my own face,
This is the thoughtful merge of myself, and the outlet again.

92. Do you guess I have some intricate purpose?
Well, I have — for the Fourth Month showers have, and the mica on the side of a rock has.

93. Do you take it I would astonish?
Does the daylight astonish? Does the early redstart, twittering through the woods?
Do I astonish more than they?

94. This hour I tell things in confidence,
I might not tell everybody, but I will tell you.

95. Who goes there! hankering, gross, mystical, nude?
How is it I extract strength from the beef I eat?

96. What is a man anyhow? What am I? What are you?

97. All I mark as my own, you shall offset it with your own,
Else it were time lost listening to me.

98. I do not snivel that snivel the world over,
That months are vacuums, and the ground but wallow and filth,
That life is a suck and a sell, and nothing remains at the end but threadbare crape, and tears.

99. Whimpering and truckling fold with powders for invalids — conformity goes to the fourth-removed,
I cock my hat as I please, indoors or out.

100. Why should I pray? Why should I venerate and be ceremonious?

101. Having pried through the strata, analyzed to a hair, counsell'd with doctors, and calculated close,
I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my own bones.

102. In all people I see myself — none more, and not one a barleycorn less,
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them.

103. And I know I am solid and sound,
To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow,
All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means.

104. I know I am deathless,
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass,

I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut
with a burnt stick at night.

105. I know I am august,
I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be
understood,
I see that the elementary laws never apologize,
I reckon I behave no prouder than the level I plant
my house by, after all.

106. I exist as I am — that is enough,
If no other in the world be aware, I sit content,
And if each and all be aware, I sit content.

107. One world is aware, and by far the largest to me, and
that is myself,
And whether I come to my own to-day, or in ten
thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerful-
ness I can wait.

108. My foothold is tenoned and mortised in granite,
I laugh at what you call dissolution,
And I know the amplitude of time.

109. I am the poet of the body,
And I am the poet of the Soul.

110. The pleasures of heaven are with me, and the pains
of hell are with me,
The first I graft and increase upon myself — the latter
I translate into a new tongue.

111. I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.

112. I chant the chant of dilation or pride,
We have had ducking and deprecating about enough,
I show that size is only development.

113. Have you outstript the rest? Are you the President?
It is a trifle — they will more than arrive there every one, and still pass on.

114. I am He that walks with the tender and growing Night,
I call to the earth and sea, half-held by the Night.

115. Press close, bare-bosomed Night! Press close, magnetic, nourishing Night!
Night of south winds! Night of the large few stars!
Still, nodding night! Mad, naked, summer night.

116. Smile, O voluptuous, cool-breathed Earth!
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
Earth of departed sunset! Earth of the mountains, misty-topt!
Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon, just tinged with blue!
Earth of shine and dark, mottling the tide of the river!
Earth of the limpid gray of clouds, brighter and clearer for my sake!

Far-swooping elbowed Earth! Rich, apple-blossomed Earth!
Smile, for YOUR LOVER comes!

117. Prodigal, you have given me love! Therefore I to you give love!
O unspeakable passionate love!

118. Thruster holding me tight, and that I hold tight!
We hurt each other as the bridegroom and the bride hurt each other.

119. You Sea! I resign myself to you also — I guess what you mean,
I behold from the beach your crooked inviting fingers,
I believe you refuse to go back without feeling of me;
We must have a turn together — I undress — hurry me out of sight of the land,
Cushion me soft, rock me in billowy drowse,
Dash me with amorous wet — I can repay you.

120. Sea of stretched ground-swells!
Sea breathing broad and convulsive breaths!
Sea of the brine of life! Sea of unshovelled and always-ready graves!
Howler and scooper of storms! Capricious and dainty Sea!
I am integral with you — I too am of one phase, and of all phases.

121. Partaker of influx and efflux — extoller of hate and conciliation,
Extoller of amies, and those that sleep in each others' arms.

122. I am he attesting sympathy,
Shall I make my list of things in the house, and skip the house that supports them?

123. I am the poet of common sense, and of the demonstrable, and of immortality,
And am not the poet of goodness only — I do not decline to be the poet of wickedness also.

124. Washes and razors for foofoos — for me freckles and a bristling beard.

125. What blurt is this about virtue and about vice?
Evil propels me, and reform of evil propels me — I stand indifferent,
My gait is no fault-finder's or rejecter's gait,
I moisten the roots of all that has grown.

126. Did you fear some scrofula out of the unflagging pregnancy?
Did you guess the celestial laws are yet to be worked over and rectified?

127. I step up to say that what we do is right, and what we affirm is right — and some is only the ore of right,
Witnesses of us — one side a balance, and the antipodal side a balance,
Soft doctrine as steady help as stable doctrine,
Thoughts and deeds of the present, our rouse and early start.

128. This minute that comes to me over the past decillions,
There is no better than it and now.

129. What behaved well in the past, or behaves well to-day, is not such a wonder,
The wonder is, always and always, how can there be a mean man or an infidel.

130. Endless unfolding of words of ages!
And mine a word of the modern — a word en-masse.

131. A word of the faith that never balks,
One time as good as another time — here or hence-forward, it is all the same to me.

132. A word of reality — materialism first and last imbuing.

133. Hurrah for positive Science! long live exact demonstration!
Fetch stonecrop, mixt with cedar and branches of lilac,
This is the lexicographer — this the chemist — this made a grammar of the old cartouches,
These mariners put the ship through dangerous unknown seas,
This is the geologist — this works with the scalpel — and this is a mathematician.

134. Gentlemen! I receive you, and attach and clasp hands with you,
The facts are useful and real — they are not my dwelling — I enter by them to an area of the dwelling.

135. I am less the reminder of property or qualities, and more the reminder of life,

And go on the square for my own sake and for others' sakes,
And make short account of neuters and geldings, and favor men and women fully equipped,
And beat the gong of revolt, and stop with fugitives, and them that plot and conspire.

136. Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs, a kosmos,
Disorderly, fleshy, sensual, eating, drinking, breeding,
No sentimentalist — no stander above men and women, or apart from them,
No more modest than immodest.

137. Unscrew the locks from the doors!
Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!

138. Whoever degrades another degrades me,
And whatever is done or said returns at last to me,
And whatever I do or say, I also return.

139. Through me the afflatus surging and surging — through me the current and index.

140. I speak the pass-word primeval — I give the sign of democracy,
By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms.

141. Through me many long dumb voices,
Voices of the interminable generations of slaves,
Voices of prostitutes, and of deformed persons,
Voices of the diseased and despairing, and of thieves and dwarfs,

Voices of cycles of preparation and accretion,
And of the threads that connect the stars — and of wombs, and of the fatherstuff,
And of the rights of them the others are down upon,
Of the trivial, flat, foolish, despised,
Fog in the air, beetles rolling balls of dung.

142. Through me forbidden voices,
Voices of sexes and lusts — voices veiled, and I remove the veil,
Voices indecent, by me clarified and transfigured.

143. I do not press my finger across my mouth,
I keep as delicate around the bowels as around the head and heart,
Copulation is no more rank to me than death is.

144. I believe in the flesh and the appetites,
Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles, and each part and tag of me is a miracle.

145. Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touched from,
The scent of these arm-pits, aroma finer than prayer,
This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds.

146. If I worship any particular thing, it shall be some of the spread of my own body.

147. Translucent mould of me, it shall be you!
Shaded ledges and rests, it shall be you!
Firm masculine colter, it shall be you.

148. Whatever goes to the tilth of me, it shall be you!
You my rich blood! Your milky stream, pale strippings of my life.

149. Breast that presses against other breasts, it shall be you!
My brain, it shall be your occult convolutions.

150. Root of washed sweet-flag! Timorous pond-snipe! Nest of guarded duplicate eggs! it shall be you!
Mixed tussled hay of head, beard, brawn, it shall be you!
Trickling sap of maple! Fibre of manly wheat! it shall be you!

151. Sun so generous, it shall be you!
Vapors lighting and shading my face, it shall be you!
You sweaty brooks and dews, it shall be you!
Winds whose soft-tickling genitals rub against me, it shall be you!
Broad, muscular fields! Branches of live oak! Loving lounger in my winding paths! it shall be you!
Hands I have taken — face I have kissed — mortal I have ever touched! it shall be you.

152. I dote on myself — there is that lot of me, and all so luscious,
Each moment, and whatever happens, thrills me with joy.

153. O I am so wonderful!
I cannot tell how my ankles bend, nor whence the cause of my faintest wish,
Nor the cause of the friendship I emit, nor the cause of the friendship I take again.

154. That I walk up my stoop, I pause to consider if it really be,
That I eat and drink is spectacle enough for the great authors and schools,
A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.

155. To behold the day-break!
The little light fades the immense and diaphanous shadows,
The air tastes good to my palate.

156. Hefts of the moving world, at innocent gambols, silently rising, freshly exuding,
Scooting obliquely high and low.

157. Something I cannot see puts upward libidinous prongs,
Seas of bright juice suffuse heaven.

158. The earth by the sky staid with — the daily close of their junction,
The heaved challenge from the east that moment over my head,
The mocking taunt, See then whether you shall be master!

159. Dazzling and tremendous, how quick the sun-rise would kill me,
If I could not now and always send sun-rise out of me.

160. We also ascend, dazzling and tremendous as the sun,
We found our own, O my Soul, in the calm and cool of the day-break.

161. My voice goes after what my eyes cannot reach,
With the twirl of my tongue I encompass worlds, and volumes of worlds.

162. Speech is the twin of my vision — it is unequal to measure itself;
It provokes me forever,
It says sarcastically, *Walt, you understand enough — why don't you let it out then?*

163. Come now, I will not be tantalized — you conceive too much of articulation.

164. Do you not know how the buds beneath are folded?
Waiting in gloom, protected by frost,
The dirt receding before my prophetical screams,
I underlying causes, to balance them at last,
My knowledge my live parts — it keeping tally with the meaning of things,
Happiness — which, whoever hears me, let him or her set out in search of this day.

165. My final merit I refuse you — I refuse putting from me the best I am.

166. Encompass worlds, but never try to encompass me,
I crowd your sleekest talk by simply looking toward you.

167. Writing and talk do not prove me,
I carry the plenum of proof, and everything else, in my face,
With the hush of my lips I confound the topmost skeptic.

168. I think I will do nothing for a long time but listen,
To accrue what I hear into myself — to let sounds contribute toward me.

169. I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames, clack of sticks cooking my meals.

170. I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice,
I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city — sounds of the day and night,
Talkative young ones to those that like them — the recitative of fish-pedlers and fruit-pedlers — the loud laugh of work-people at their meals,
The angry base of disjointed friendship — the faint tones of the sick,
The judge with hands tight to the desk, his shaky lips pronouncing a death-sentence,
The heave'e'yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves — the refrain of the anchor-lifters,

The ring of alarm-bells — the cry of fire — the whirr of swift-streaking engines and hose-carts, with premonitory tinkles, and colored lights,
The steam-whistle — the solid roll of the train of approaching cars,
The slow-march played at night at the head of the association, marching two and two,
(They go to guard some corpse — the flag-tops are draped with black muslin.)

171. I hear the violoncello, or man's heart's complaint;
I hear the keyed cornet — it glides quickly in through my ears,
It shakes mad-sweet pangs through my belly and breast.

172. I hear the chorus — it is a grand-opera,
Ah, this indeed is music! This suits me.

173. A tenor large and fresh as the creation fills me,
The orbic flex of his mouth is pouring and filling me full.

174. I hear the trained soprano — she convulses me like the climax of my love-grip,
The orchestra wrenches such ardors from me, I did not know I possessed them,
It throbs me to gulps of the farthest down horror,
It sails me — I dab with bare feet — they are licked by the indolent waves,
I am exposed, cut by bitter and poisoned hail,
Steeped amid honeyed morphine, my windpipe throttled in fakes of death,

At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,
And that we call BEING.

175. To be in any form — what is that?
(Round and round we go, all of us, and ever come back thither,)
If nothing lay more developed, the quahaug in its callous shell were enough.

176. Mine is no callous shell,
I have instant conductors all over me, whether I pass or stop,
They seize every object, and lead it harmlessly through me.

177. I merely stir, press, feel with my fingers, and am happy,
To touch my person to some one else's is about as much as I can stand.

178. Is this then a touch? quivering me to a new identity,
Flames and ether making a rush for my veins,
Treacherous tip of me reaching and crowding to help them,
My flesh and blood playing out lightning to strike what is hardly different from myself,
On all sides prurient provokers stiffening my limbs,
Straining the udder of my heart for its withheld drip,
Behaving licentious toward me, taking no denial,
Depriving me of my best, as for a purpose,
Unbuttoning my clothes, holding me by the bare waist,

Deluding my confusion with the calm of the sun-light and pasture-fields,
Immodestly sliding the fellow-senses away,
They bribed to swap off with touch, and go and graze at the edges of me,
No consideration, no regard for my draining strength or my anger,
Fetching the rest of the herd around to enjoy them a while,
Then all uniting to stand on a headland and worry me.

179. The sentries desert every other part of me,
They have left me helpless to a red marauder,
They all come to the headland, to witness and assist against me.

180. I am given up by traitors,
I talk wildly — I have lost my wits — I and nobody else am the greatest traitor,
I went myself first to the headland — my own hands carried me there.

181. You villain touch! what are you doing? My breath is tight in its throat,
Unclench your floodgates! you are too much for me.

182. Blind, loving, wrestling touch! sheathed, hooded, sharp-toothed touch!
Did it make you ache so, leaving me?

183. Parting, tracked by arriving — perpetual payment of perpetual loan,

Rich showering rain, and recompense richer afterward.

184. Sprouts take and accumulate — stand by the curb prolific and vital,
Landscapes, projected, masculine, full-sized, and golden.

185. All truths wait in all things,
They neither hasten their own delivery, nor resist it,
They do not need the obstetric forceps of the surgeon,
The insignificant is as big to me as any,
What is less or more than a touch?

186. Logic and sermons never convince,
The damp of the night drives deeper into my Soul.

187. Only what proves itself to every man and woman is so,
Only what nobody denies is so.

188. A minute and a drop of me settle my brain,
I believe the soggy clods shall become lovers and lamps,
And a compend of compends is the meat of a man or woman,
And a summit and flower there is the feeling they have for each other,
And they are to branch boundlessly out of that lesson until it becomes omnific,
And until every one shall delight us, and we them.

189. I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars,
And the pismire is equally perfect, and a grain of sand, and the egg of the wren,
And the tree-toad is a chef-d'œuvre for the highest,
And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven,
And the narrowest hinge in my hand puts to scorn all machinery,
And the cow crunching with depressed head surpasses any statue,
And a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels,
And I could come every afternoon of my life to look at the farmer's girl boiling her iron tea-kettle and baking short-cake.

190. I find I incorporate gneiss, coal, long-threaded moss, fruits, grains, esculent roots,
And am stuccoed with quadrupeds and birds all over,
And have distanced what is behind me for good reasons,
And call anything close again, when I desire it.

191. In vain the speeding or shyness,
In vain the plutonic rocks send their old heat against my approach,
In vain the mastodon retreats beneath its own powdered bones,
In vain objects stand leagues off, and assume manifold shapes,
In vain the ocean settling in hollows, and the great monsters lying low,

In vain the buzzard houses herself with the sky,
In vain the snake slides through the creepers and logs,
In vain the elk takes to the inner passes of the woods,
In vain the razor-billed auk sails far north to Labrador,
I follow quickly, I ascend to the nest in the fissure of the cliff.

192. I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained,
I stand and look at them sometimes an hour at a stretch.

193. They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
No one is dissatisfied — not one is demented with the mania of owning things,
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.

194. So they show their relations to me, and I accept them,
They bring me tokens of myself — they evince them plainly in their possession.

195. I do not know where they get those tokens,

I may have passed that way untold times ago, and negligently dropt them,
Myself moving forward then and now forever,
Gathering and showing more always and with velocity,
Infinite and omnigenous, and the like of these among them,
Not too exclusive toward the reachers of my rememberancers,
Picking out here one that I love, to go with on brotherly terms.

196. A gigantic beauty of a stallion, fresh and responsive to my caresses,
Head high in the forehead, wide between the ears,
Limbs glossy and supple, tail dusting the ground,
Eyes well apart, full of sparkling wickedness — ears finely cut, flexibly moving.

197. His nostrils dilate, as my heels embrace him,
His well-built limbs tremble with pleasure, as we speed around and return.

198. I but use you a moment, then I resign you stallion,
Why do I need your paces, when I myself out-gallop them?
Even, as I stand or sit, passing faster than you.

199. O swift wind! Space! my Soul! now I know it is true, what I guessed at,
What I guessed when I loafed on the grass,
What I guessed while I lay alone in my bed,
And again as I walked the beach under the paling stars of the morning.

200. My ties and ballasts leave me — I travel — I sail — my elbows rest in the sea-gaps,
I skirt the sierras — my palms cover continents,
I am afoot with my vision.

201. By the city's quadrangular houses — in log huts — camping with lumbermen,
Along the ruts of the turnpike — along the dry gulch and rivulet bed,
Weeding my onion-patch, or hoeing rows of carrots and parsnips — crossing savannas — trailing in forests,
Prospecting — gold-digging — girdling the trees of a new purchase,
Scorched ankle-deep by the hot sand — hauling my boat down the shallow river,
Where the panther walks to and fro on a limb overhead — Where the buck turns furiously at the hunter,
Where the rattlesnake suns his flabby length on a rock — Where the otter is feeding on fish,
Where the alligator in his tough pimples sleeps by the bayou,
Where the black bear is searching for roots or honey —Where the beaver pats the mud with his paddle-tail,
Over the growing sugar — over the cotton plant — over the rice in its low moist field,
Over the sharp-peaked farm house, with its scalloped scum and slender shoots from the gutters,
Over the western persimmon — over the long-leaved corn — over the delicate blue-flowered flax,
Over the white and brown buckwheat, a hummer and buzzer there with the rest,

Over the dusky green of the rye as it ripples and shades in the breeze,
Scaling mountains, pulling myself cautiously up, holding on by low scragged limbs,
Walking the path worn in the grass and beat through the leaves of the brush,
Where the quail is whistling betwixt the woods and the wheat-lot,
Where the bat flies in the Seventh Month eve — Where the great gold-bug drops through the dark,
Where the flails keep time on the barn floor,
Where the brook puts out of the roots of the old tree and flows to the meadow,
Where cattle stand and shake away flies with the tremulous shuddering of their hides,
Where the cheese-cloth hangs in the kitchen — Where andirons straddle the hearth-slab — Where cob-webs fall in festoons from the rafters,
Where trip-hammers crash — Where the press is whirling its cylinders,
Wherever the human heart beats with terrible throes out of its ribs,
Where the pear-shaped balloon is floating aloft, floating in it myself. and looking composedly down,
Where the life-car is drawn on the slip-noose — Where the heat hatches pale-green eggs in the dented sand,
Where the she-whale swims with her calf, and never forsakes it,
Where the steam-ship trails hind-ways its long pennant of smoke,
Where the fin of the shark cuts like a black chip out of the water,

Where the half-burned brig is riding on unknown currents,
Where shells grow to her slimy deck — Where the dead are corrupting below,
Where the striped and starred flag is borne at the head of the regiments,
Approaching Manhattan, up by the long-stretching island,
Under Niagara, the cataract falling like a veil over my countenance,
Upon a door-step — upon the horse-block of hard wood outside,
Upon the race-course, or enjoying picnics or jigs, or a good game of base-ball,
At he-festivals, with blackguard gibes, ironical license, bull-dances, drinking, laughter,
At the cider-mill, tasting the sweet of the brown sqush, sucking the juice through a straw,
At apple-peelings, wanting kisses for all the red fruit I find,
At musters, beach-parties, friendly bees, huskings, house-raisings;
Where the mocking-bird sounds his delicious gurgles, cackles, screams, weeps,
Where the hay-rick stands in the barn-yard — Where the dry-stalks are scattered — Where the brood cow waits in the hovel,
Where the bull advances to do his masculine work — Where the stud to the mare — Where the cock is treading the hen,
Where heifers browse — Where geese nip their food with short jerks,
Where sun-down shadows lengthen over the limitless and lonesome prairie,

Where herds of buffalo make a crawling spread of the square miles far and near,
Where the humming-bird shimmers — Where the neck of the long-lived swan is curving and winding,
Where the laughing-gull scoots by the shore, where she laughs her near-human laugh,
Where bee-hives range on a gray bench in the garden, half hid by the high weeds,
Where band-necked partridges roost in a ring on the ground with their heads out,
Where burial coaches enter the arched gates of a cemetery,
Where winter wolves bark amid wastes of snow and icicled trees,
Where the yellow-crowned heron comes to the edge of the marsh at night and feeds upon small crabs,
Where the splash of swimmers and divers cools the warm noon,
Where the katy-did works her chromatic reed on the walnut-tree over the well,
Through patches of citrons and cucumbers with silver-wired leaves,
Through the salt-lick or orange glade, or under conical firs,
Through the gymnasium — through the curtained saloon — through the office or public hall,
Pleased with the native, and pleased with the foreign — pleased with the new and old,
Pleased with women, the homely as well as the handsome,
Pleased with the quakeress as she puts off her bonnet and talks melodiously,

Pleased with the tunes of the choir of the white-washed church,
Pleased with the earnest words of the sweating Methodist preacher, or any preacher — Impressed seriously at the camp-meeting,
Looking in at the shop-windows of Broadway the whole forenoon — flatting the flesh of my nose on the thick plate-glass,
Wandering the same afternoon with my face turned up to the clouds,
My right and left arms round the sides of two friends, and I in the middle;
Coming home with the silent and dark-cheeked bush-boy — riding behind him at the drape of the day,
Far from the settlements, studying the print of animals' feet, or the moccason print,
By the cot in the hospital, reaching lemonade to a feverish patient,
By the coffined corpse when all is still, examining with a candle,
Voyaging to every port, to dicker and adventure,
Hurrying with the modern crowd, as eager and fickle as any,
Hot toward one I hate, ready in my madness to knife him,
Solitary at midnight in my back yard, my thoughts gone from me a long while,
Walking the old hills of Judea, with the beautiful gentle God by my side,
Speeding through space — speeding through heaven and the stars,

Speeding amid the seven satellites, and the broad ring, and the diameter of eighty thousand miles,
Speeding with tailed meteors — throwing fire-balls like the rest,
Carrying the crescent child that carries its own full mother in its belly,
Storming, enjoying, planning, loving, cautioning,
Backing and filling, appearing and disappearing,
I tread day and night such roads.

202. I visit the orchards of spheres, and look at the product,
And look at quintillions ripened, and look at quintillions green.

203. I fly the flight of the fluid and swallowing soul,
My course runs below the soundings of plummets.

204. I help myself to material and immaterial,
No guard can shut me off, nor law prevent me.

205. I anchor my ship for a little while only,
My messengers continually cruise away, or bring their returns to me.

206. I go hunting polar furs and the seal — Leaping chasms with a pike-pointed staff — Clinging to topples of brittle and blue.

207. I ascend to the foretruck,
I take my place late at night in the crow's-nest,
We sail the arctic sea — it is plenty light enough,
Through the clear atmosphere I stretch around on the wonderful beauty,

The enormous masses of ice pass me, and I pass them
— the scenery is plain in all directions,
The white-topped mountains show in the distance —
I fling out my fancies toward them,
We are approaching some great battle-field in which
we are soon to be engaged,
We pass the colossal out-posts of the encampment —
we pass with still feet and caution,
Or we are entering by the suburbs some vast and
ruined city,
The blocks and fallen architecture more than all the
living cities of the globe.

208. I am a free companion — I bivouac by invading
watchfires.

209. I turn the bridegroom out of bed, and stay with the
bride myself,
I tighten her all night to my thighs and lips.

210. My voice is the wife's voice, the screech by the rail
of the stairs,
They fetch my man's body up, dripping and drowned.

211. I understand the large hearts of heroes,
The courage of present times and all times,
How the skipper saw the crowded and rudderless
wreck of the steam-ship, and Death chasing it up
and down the storm,
How he knuckled tight, and gave not back one inch,
and was faithful of days and faithful of nights,
And chalked in large letters, on a board, *Be of good
cheer, We will not desert you,*

How he followed with them, and tacked with them — and would not give it up,
How he saved the drifting company at last,
How the lank loose-gowned women looked when boated from the side of their prepared graves,
How the silent old-faced infants, and the lifted sick, and the sharp-lipped unshaved men,
All this I swallow — it tastes good — I like it well — it becomes mine,
I am the man — I suffered — I was there.

212. The disdain and calmness of martyrs,
The mother, condemned for a witch, burnt with dry wood, her children gazing on,
The hounded slave that flags in the race, leans by the the fence, blowing, covered with sweat,
The twinges that sting like needles his legs and neck — the murderous buck-shot and the bullets,
All these I feel or am.

213. I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs,
Hell and despair are upon me, crack and again crack the marksmen,
I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs, thinned with the ooze of my skin,
I fall on the weeds and stones,
The riders spur their unwilling horses, haul close,
Taunt my dizzy ears, and beat me violently over the head with whip-stocks.

214. Agonies are one of my changes of garments,
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels — I myself become the wounded person,

My hurt turns livid upon me as I lean on a cane and observe.

215. I am the mashed fireman with breastbone broken,
Tumbling walls buried me in their debris,
Heat and smoke I inspired — I heard the yelling shouts of my comrades,
I heard the distant click of their picks and shovels,
They have cleared the beams away — they tenderly lift me forth.

216. I lie in the night air in my red shirt — the pervading hush is for my sake,
Painless after all I lie, exhausted but not so unhappy,
White and beautiful are the faces around me — the heads are bared of their fire-caps,
The kneeling crowd fades with the light of the torches.

217. Distant and dead resuscitate,
They show as the dial or move as the hands of me — I am the clock myself.

218. I am an old artillerist — I tell of my fort's bombardment,
I am there again.

219. Again the reveille of drummers,
Again the attacking cannon, mortars, howitzers,
Again the attacked send cannon responsive.

220. I take part — I see and hear the whole,
The cries, curses, roar — the plaudits for well-aimed shots,

The ambulanza slowly passing, trailing its red drip,
Workmen searching after damages, making indispensable repairs,
The fall of grenades through the rent roof — the fan-shaped explosion,
The whizz of limbs, heads, stone, wood, iron, high in the air.

221. Again gurgles the mouth of my dying general — he furiously waves with his hand,
He gasps through the clot, *Mind not me — mind — the entrenchments.*

222. I tell not the fall of Alamo,
Not one escaped to tell the fall of Alamo,
The hundred and fifty are dumb yet at Alamo.

223. Hear now the tale of the murder in cold blood of four hundred and twelve young men.

224. Retreating, they had formed in a hollow square, with their baggage for breastworks,
Nine hundred lives out of the surrounding enemy's, nine times their number, was the price they took in advance,
Their colonel was wounded and their ammunition gone,
They treated for an honorable capitulation, received writing and seal, gave up their arms, and marched back prisoners of war.

225. They were the glory of the race of rangers,
Matchless with horse, rifle, song, supper, courtship,

Large, turbulent, generous, brave, handsome, proud, and affectionate,
Bearded, sunburnt, dressed in the free costume of hunters,
Not a single one over thirty years of age.

226. The second First Day morning they were brought out in squads and massacred — it was beautiful early summer,
The work commenced about five o'clock, and was over by eight.

227. None obeyed the command to kneel,
Some made a mad and helpless rush — some stood stark and straight,
A few fell at once, shot in the temple or heart — the living and dead lay together,
The maimed and mangled dug in the dirt — the new-comers saw them there,
Some, half-killed, attempted to crawl away,
These were despatched with bayonets, or battered with the blunts of muskets,
A youth not seventeen years old seized his assassin till two more came to release him,
The three were all torn, and covered with the boy's blood.

228. At eleven o'clock began the burning of the bodies:
That is the tale of the murder of the four hundred and twelve young men.

229. Did you read in the sea-books of the old-fashioned frigate-fight?

Did you learn who won by the light of the moon and stars?

230. Our foe was no skulk in his ship, I tell you,
His was the English pluck — and there is no tougher or truer, and never was, and never will be;
Along the lowered eve he came, horribly raking us.

231. We closed with him — the yards entangled — the cannon touched,
My captain lashed fast with his own hands.

232. We had received some eighteen-pound shots under the water,
On our lower-gun-deck two large pieces had burst at the first fire, killing all around, and blowing up overhead.

233. Ten o'clock at night, and the full moon shining, and the leaks on the gain, and five feet of water reported,
The master-at-arms loosing the prisoners confined in the after-hold, to give them a chance for themselves.

234. The transit to and from the magazine was now stopped by the sentinels,
They saw so many strange faces, they did not know whom to trust.

235. Our frigate was afire,
The other asked if we demanded quarter?
If our colors were struck, and the fighting done?

236. I laughed content when I heard the voice of my little captain,
We have not struck, he composedly cried, *We have just begun our part of the fighting*.

237. Only three guns were in use,
One was directed by the captain himself against the enemy's main-mast,
Two, well served with grape and canister, silenced his musketry and cleared his decks.

238. The tops alone seconded the fire of this little battery, especially the main-top,
They all held out bravely during the whole of the action.

239. Not a moment's cease,
The leaks gained fast on the pumps — the fire eat toward the powder-magazine,
One of the pumps was shot away — it was generally thought we were sinking.

240. Serene stood the little captain,
He was not hurried — his voice was neither high nor low,
His eyes gave more light to us than our battle-lanterns.

241. Toward twelve at night, there in the beams of the moon, they surrendered to us.

242. Stretched and still lay the midnight,
Two great hulls motionless on the breast of the darkness,

Our vessel riddled and slowly sinking — preparations to pass to the one we had conquered,
The captain on the quarter-deck coldly giving his orders through a countenance white as a sheet,
Near by, the corpse of the child that served in the cabin,
The dead face of an old salt with long white hair and carefully curled whiskers,
The flames, spite of all that could be done, flickering aloft and below,
The husky voices of the two or three officers yet fit for duty,
Formless stacks of bodies, and bodies by themselves — dabs of flesh upon the masts and spars,
Cut of cordage, dangle of rigging, slight shock of the soothe of waves,
Black and impassive guns, litter of powder-parcels, strong scent,
Delicate sniffs of sea-breeze, smells of sedgy grass and fields by the shore, death-messages given in charge to survivors,
The hiss of the surgeon's knife, the gnawing teeth of his saw,
Wheeze, cluck, swash of falling blood, short wild scream, and long dull tapering groan,
These so — these irretrievable.

243. O Christ! This is mastering me!
Through the conquered doors they crowd. I am possessed.

244. What the rebel said, gayly adjusting his throat to the rope-noose,

What the savage at the stump, his eye-sockets empty, his mouth spirting whoops and defiance,
What stills the traveller come to the vault at Mount Vernon,
What sobers the Brooklyn boy as he looks down the shores of the Wallabout and remembers the Prison Ships,
What burnt the gums of the red-coat at Saratoga when he surrendered his brigades,
These become mine and me every one — and they are but little,
I become as much more as I like.

245. I become any presence or truth of humanity here,
See myself in prison shaped like another man,
And feel the dull unintermitted pain.

246. For me the keepers of convicts shoulder their carbines and keep watch,
It is I let out in the morning and barred at night.

247. Not a mutineer walks hand-cuffed to the jail, but I am hand-cuffed to him and walk by his side,
I am less the jolly one there, and more the silent one, with sweat on my twitching lips.

248. Not a youngster is taken for larceny, but I go up too, and am tried and sentenced.

249. Not a cholera patient lies at the last gasp, but I also lie at the last gasp,
My face is ash-colored — my sinews gnarl — away from me people retreat.

250. Askers embody themselves in me, and I am embodied in them,
I project my hat, sit shame-faced, and beg.

251. Enough — I bring such to a close,
Rise extatic through all, sweep with the true gravitation,
The whirling and whirling elemental within me.

252. Somehow I have been stunned. Stand back!
Give me a little time beyond my cuffed head, slumbers, dreams, gaping,
I discover myself on the verge of a usual mistake.

253. That I could forget the mockers and insults!
That I could forget the trickling tears, and the blows of the bludgeons and hammers!
That I could look with a separate look on my own crucifixion and bloody crowning.

254. I remember now,
I resume the overstaid fraction,
The grave of rock multiplies what has been confided to it, or to any graves,
Corpses rise, gashes heal, fastenings roll from me.

255. I troop forth replenished with supreme power, one of an average unending procession,
We walk the roads of the six North Eastern States, and of Virginia, Wisconsin, Manhattan Island, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Texas, Charleston, Havana, Mexico,
Inland and by the sea-coast and boundary lines, and we pass all boundary lines.

256. Our swift ordinances are on their way over the whole earth,
The blossoms we wear in our hats are the growth of two thousand years.

257. Élèves, I salute you!
I see the approach of your numberless gangs — I see you understand yourselves and me,
And know that they who have eyes and can walk are divine, and the blind and lame are equally divine,
And that my steps drag behind yours, yet go before them,
And are aware how I am with you no more than I am with everybody.

258. The friendly and flowing savage, Who is he?
Is he waiting for civilization, or past it and mastering it?

259. Is he some south-westerner, raised out-doors? Is he Kanadian?
Is he from the Mississippi country? Iowa, Oregon, California? the mountains? prairie-life, bush-life? or from the sea?

260. Wherever he goes men and women accept and desire him,
They desire he should like them, touch them, speak to them, stay with them.

261. Behavior lawless as snow-flakes, words simple as grass, uncombed head, laughter, and naïveté,
Slow-stepping feet, common features, common modes and emanations,

They descend in new forms from the tips of his fingers,
They are wafted with the odor of his body or breath — they fly out of the glance of his eyes.

262. Flaunt of the sunshine, I need not your bask, — lie over!
You light surfaces only — I force surfaces and depths also.

Earth! you seem to look for something at my hands,
Say, old Top-knot! what do you want?

263. Man or woman! I might tell how I like you, but cannot,
And might tell what it is in me, and what it is in you, but cannot,
And might tell that pining I have — that pulse of my nights and days.

264. Behold! I do not give lectures or a little charity,
What I give, I give out of myself.

265. You there, impotent, loose in the knees,
Open your scarfed chops till I blow grit within you,
Spread your palms, and lift the flaps of your pockets;
I am not to be denied — I compel — I have stores plenty and to spare,
And anything I have I bestow.

266. I do not ask who you are — that is not important to me,
You can do nothing, and be nothing, but what I will infold you.

267. To a drudge of the cotton-fields or cleaner of privies I lean,
On his right cheek I put the family kiss,
And in my soul I swear, I never will deny him.

268. On women fit for conception I start bigger and nimbler babes,
This day I am jetting the stuff of far more arrogant republics.

269. To any one dying — thither I speed, and twist the knob of the door,
Turn the bed-clothes toward the foot of the bed,
Let the physician and the priest go home.

270. I seize the descending man, and raise him with resistless will.

271. O despairer, here is my neck,
By God! you shall not go down! Hang your whole weight upon me.

272. I dilate you with tremendous breath — I buoy you up,
Every room of the house do I fill with an armed force,
Lovers of me, bafflers of graves.

273. Sleep! I and they keep guard all night,
Not doubt — not decease shall dare to lay finger upon you,
I have embraced you, and henceforth possess you to myself,
And when you rise in the morning you will find what I tell you is so.

274. I am he bringing help for the sick as they pant on their backs,
And for strong upright men I bring yet more needed help.

275. I heard what was said of the universe,
Heard it and heard it of several thousand years;
It is middling well as far as it goes,—But is that all?

276. Magnifying and applying come I,
Outbidding at the start the old cautious hucksters,
The most they offer for mankind and eternity less than a spirt of my own seminal wet,
Taking myself the exact dimensions of Jehovah,
Lithographing Kronos, Zeus his son, and Hercules his grandson,
Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma, Buddha,
In my portfolio placing Manito loose, Allah on a leaf, the crucifix engraved,
With Odin, and the hideous-faced Mexitli, and every idol and image,
Taking them all for what they are worth, and not a cent more,
Admitting they were alive and did the work of their day,
Admitting they bore mites, as for unfledged birds, who have now to rise and fly and sing for themselves,
Accepting the rough deific sketches to fill out better in myself—bestowing them freely on each man and woman I see,
Discovering as much, or more, in a framer framing a house,

Putting higher claims for him there with his rolled-up sleeves, driving the mallet and chisel,
Not objecting to special revelations — considering a curl of smoke or a hair on the back of my hand just as curious as any revelation,
Those ahold of fire engines and hook-and-ladder ropes no less to me than the Gods of the antique wars,
Minding their voices peal through the crash of destruction,
Their brawny limbs passing safe over charred laths — their white foreheads whole and unhurt out of the flames;
By the mechanic's wife with her babe at her nipple interceding for every person born,
Three scythes at harvest whizzing in a row from three lusty angels with shirts bagged out at their waists,
The snag-toothed hostler with red hair redeeming sins past and to come,
Selling all he possesses, travelling on foot to fee lawyers for his brother, and sit by him while he is tried for forgery;
What was strewn in the amplest strewing the square rod about me, and not filling the square rod then,
The bull and the bug never worshipped half enough,
Dung and dirt more admirable than was dreamed,
The supernatural of no account — myself waiting my time to be one of the Supremes,
The day getting ready for me when I shall do as much good as the best, and be as prodigious,
Guessing when I am it will not tickle me much to receive puffs out of pulpit or print;

By my life-lumps! becoming already a creator,
Putting myself here and now to the ambushed womb of the shadows.

277. A call in the midst of the crowd,
My own voice, orotund, sweeping, final.

278. Come my children,
Come my boys and girls, my women, household, and intimates,
Now the performer launches his nerve — he has passed his prelude on the reeds within.

279. Easily written, loose-fingered chords! I feel the thrum of their climax and close.

280. My head slues round on my neck,
Music rolls, but not from the organ,
Folks are around me, but they are no household of mine.

281. Ever the hard unsunk ground,
Ever the eaters and drinkers — Ever the upward and downward sun — Ever the air and the ceaseless tides,
Ever myself and my neighbors, refreshing, wicked, real,
Ever the old inexplicable query — Ever that thorned thumb — that breath of itches and thirsts,
Ever the vexer's *hoot! hoot!* till we find where the sly one hides, and bring him forth;
Ever love — Ever the sobbing liquid of life,
Ever the bandage under the chin — Ever the tressels of death.

282. Here and there, with dimes on the eyes walking,
To feed the greed of the belly, the brains liberally spooning,
Tickets buying, taking, selling, but in to the feast never once going,
Many sweating, ploughing, thrashing, and then the chaff for payment receiving,
A few idly owning, and they the wheat continually claiming.

283. This is the city, and I am one of the citizens,
Whatever interests the rest interests me — politics, markets, newspapers, schools,
Benevolent societies, improvements, banks, tariffs, steamships, factories, stocks, stores, real estate, and personal estate.

284. They who piddle and patter here in collars and tailed coats — I am aware who they are — they are not worms or fleas.

285. I acknowledge the duplicates of myself — the weakest and shallowest is deathless with me,
What I do and say, the same waits for them,
Every thought that flounders in me, the same flounders in them.

286. I know perfectly well my own egotism,
I know my omnivorous words, and cannot say any less,
And would fetch you, whoever you are, flush with myself.

287. My words are words of a questioning, and to indicate reality and motive power:
This printed and bound book — but the printer, and the printing-office boy?
The well-taken photographs — but your wife or friend close and solid in your arms?
The fleet of ships of the line, and all the modern improvements — but the craft and pluck of the admiral?
The dishes and fare and furniture — but the host and hostess, and the look out of their eyes?
The sky up there — yet here, or next door, or across the way?
The saints and sages in history — but you yourself?
Sermons, creeds, theology — but the human brain, and what is reason? and what is love? and what is life?

288. I do not despise you, priests,
My faith is the greatest of faiths, and the least of faiths,
Enclosing all worship ancient and modern, and all between ancient and modern,
Believing I shall come again upon the earth after five thousand years,
Waiting responses from oracles, honoring the Gods, saluting the sun,
Making a fetish of the first rock or stump, powwowing with sticks in the circle of obis,
Helping the lama or brahmin as he trims the lamps of the idols,
Dancing yet through the streets in a phallic procession — rapt and austere in the woods, a gymnosophist,

Drinking mead from the skull-cup — to Shastas and Vedas admirant — minding the Koran,
Walking the teokallis, spotted with gore from the stone and knife, beating the serpent-skin drum,
Accepting the Gospels — accepting him that was crucified, knowing assuredly that he is divine,
To the mass kneeling, or the puritan's prayer rising, or sitting patiently in a pew,
Ranting and frothing in my insane crisis, or waiting dead-like till my spirit arouses me,
Looking forth on pavement and land, or outside of pavement and land,
Belonging to the winders of the circuit of circuits.

289. One of that centripetal and centrifugal gang, I turn and talk like a man leaving charges before a journey.

290. Down-hearted doubters, dull and excluded,
Frivolous, sullen, moping, angry, affected, disheartened, atheistical,
I know every one of you — I know the unspoken interrogatories,
By experience I know them.

291. How the flukes splash!
How they contort, rapid as lightning, with spasms, and spouts of blood!

292. Be at peace, bloody flukes of doubters and sullen mopers,
I take my place among you as much as among any,
The past is the push of you, me, all, precisely the same,

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Day and night are for you, me, all,
And what is yet untried and afterward is for you, me, all, precisely the same.

293. I do not know what is untried and afterward,
But I know it is sure, alive, sufficient.

294. Each who passes is considered — Each who stops is considered — Not a single one can it fail.

295. It cannot fail the young man who died and was buried,
Nor the young woman who died and was put by his side,
Nor the little child that peeped in at the door, and then drew back, and was never seen again,
Nor the old man who has lived without purpose, and feels it with bitterness worse than gall,
Nor him in the poor-house, tubercled by rum and the bad disorder,
Nor the numberless slaughtered and wrecked — nor the brutish koboo called the ordure of humanity,
Nor the sacs merely floating with open mouths for food to slip in,
Nor anything in the earth, or down in the oldest graves of the earth,
Nor anything in the myriads of spheres — nor one of the myriads of myriads that inhabit them,
Nor the present — nor the least wisp that is known.

296. It is time to explain myself — Let us stand up.

297. What is known I strip away,
I launch all men and women forward with me into THE UNKNOWN.

298. The clock indicates the moment — but what does eternity indicate?

299. We have thus far exhausted trillions of winters and summers,
There are trillions ahead, and trillions ahead of them.

300. Births have brought us richness and variety,
And other births will bring us richness and variety.

301. I do not call one greater and one smaller,
That which fills its period and place is equal to any.

302. Were mankind murderous or jealous upon you, my brother, my sister?
I am sorry for you — they are not murderous or jealous upon me,
All has been gentle with me — I keep no account with lamentation,
(What have I to do with lamentation?)

303. I am an acme of things accomplished, and I an encloser of things to be.

304. My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs,
On every step bunches of ages, and larger bunches between the steps,
All below duly travelled, and still I mount and mount.

305. Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me,
Afar down I see the huge first Nothing — I know I was even there,
I waited unseen and always, and slept through the lethargic mist,

And took my time, and took no hurt from the fetid carbon.

303. Long I was hugged close — long and long.

307. Immense have been the preparations for me,
Faithful and friendly the arms that have helped me.

308. Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,
For room to me stars kept aside in their own rings,
They sent influences to look after what was to hold me.

309. Before I was born out of my mother, generations guided me,
My embryo has never been torpid — nothing could overlay it.

310. For it the nebula cohered to an orb,
The long slow strata piled to rest it on,
Vast vegetables gave it sustenance,
Monstrous sauroids transported it in their mouths, and deposited it with care.

311. All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me,
Now I stand on this spot with my Soul.

312. O span of youth! Ever-pushed elasticity!
O manhood, balanced, florid, and full.

313. My lovers suffocate me!
Crowding my lips, thick in the pores of my skin,
Jostling me through streets and public halls — coming naked to me at night,

Crying by day *Ahoy!* from the rocks of the river
— swinging and chirping over my head,
Calling my name from flower-beds, vines, tangled
under-brush,
Or while I swim in the bath, or drink from the pump
at the corner — or the curtain is down at the
opera, or I glimpse at a woman's face in the
railroad car,
Lighting on every moment of my life,
Bussing my body with soft balsamic busses,
Noiselessly passing handfuls out of their hearts, and
giving them to be mine.

314. Old age superbly rising! O welcome, ineffable grace
of dying days!

315. Every condition promulges not only itself — it pro-
mulges what grows after and out of itself,
And the dark hush promulges as much as any.

316. I open my scuttle at night and see the far-sprinkled
systems,
And all I see, multiplied as high as I can cipher, edge
but the rim of the farther systems.

317. Wider and wider they spread, expanding, always
expanding,
Outward, outward, and forever outward.

318 My sun has his sun, and round him obediently
wheels,
He joins with his partners a group of superior circuit,
And greater sets follow, making specks of the greatest
inside them.

319. There is no stoppage, and never can be stoppage,
If I, you, the worlds, all beneath or upon their surfaces, and all the palpable life, were this moment reduced back to a pallid float, it would not avail in the long run,
We should surely bring up again where we now stand,
And as surely go as much farther — and then farther and farther.

320. A few quadrillions of eras, a few octillions of cubic leagues, do not hazard the span, or make it impatient,
They are but parts — anything is but a part.

321. See ever so far, there is limitless space outside of that,
Count ever so much, there is limitless time around that.

322. My rendezvous is appointed,
The Lord will be there, and wait till I come on perfect terms.

323. I know I have the best of time and space, and was never measured, and never will be measured.

324. I tramp a perpetual journey,
My signs are a rain-proof coat, good shoes, and a staff cut from the woods,
No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,
I have no chair, no church, no philosophy,
I lead no man to a dinner-table, library, or exchange,

But each man and each woman of you I lead upon a knoll,
My left hand hooking you round the waist,
My right hand pointing to landscapes of continents, and a plain public road.

325. Not I — not any one else, can travel that road for you,
You must travel it for yourself.

326. It is not far — it is within reach,
Perhaps you have been on it since you were born, and did not know,
Perhaps it is every where on water and on land.

327. Shoulder your duds, and I will mine, and let us hasten forth,
Wonderful cities and free nations we shall fetch as we go.

328. If you tire, give me both burdens, and rest the chuff of your hand on my hip,
And in due time you shall repay the same service to me,
For after we start we never lie by again.

329. This day before dawn I ascended a hill, and looked at the crowded heaven,
And I said to my Spirit, *When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be filled and satisfied then?*
And my Spirit said *No, we level that lift, to pass and continue beyond.*

330. You are also asking me questions, and I hear you,
I answer that I cannot answer — you must find out for yourself.

331. Sit a while, wayfarer,
Here are biscuits to eat, and here is milk to drink,
But as soon as you sleep, and renew yourself in sweet clothes, I will certainly kiss you with my good-bye kiss, and open the gate for your egress hence.

332. Long enough have you dreamed contemptible dreams,
Now I wash the gum from your eyes,
You must habit yourself to the dazzle of the light, and of every moment of your life.

333. Long have you timidly waded, holding a plank by the shore,
Now I will you to be a bold swimmer,
To jump off in the midst of the sea, rise again, nod to me, shout, and laughingly dash with your hair.

334. I am the teacher of athletes,
He that by me spreads a wider breast than my own, proves the width of my own,
He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher.

335. The boy I love, the same becomes a man, not through derived power, but in his own right,
Wicked, rather than virtuous out of conformity or fear,
Fond of his sweetheart, relishing well his steak,

Unrequited love, or a slight, cutting him worse than a wound cuts,
First rate to ride, to fight, to hit the bull's-eye, to sail a skiff, to sing a song, or play on the banjo,
Preferring scars, and faces pitted with small-pox, over all latherers, and those that keep out of the sun.

336. I teach straying from me — yet who can stray from me?
I follow you, whoever you are, from the present hour,
My words itch at your ears till you understand them.

337. I do not say these things for a dollar, or to fill up the time while I wait for a boat,
It is you talking just as much as myself — I act as the tongue of you,
Tied in your mouth, in mine it begins to be loosened.

338. I swear I will never again mention love or death inside a house,
And I swear I will never translate myself at all, only to him or her who privately stays with me in the open air.

339. If you would understand me, go to the heights or water-shore,
The nearest gnat is an explanation, and a drop or motion of waves a key,
The maul, the oar, the hand-saw, second my words.

340. No shuttered room or school can commune with me,
But roughs and little children better than they.

341. The young mechanic is closest to me — he knows me pretty well,
The woodman, that takes his axe and jug with him, shall take me with him all day,
The farm-boy, ploughing in the field, feels good at the sound of my voice,
In vessels that sail, my words sail — I go with fishermen and seamen, and love them.

342. My face rubs to the hunter's face, when he lies down alone in his blanket,
The driver, thinking of me, does not mind the jolt of his wagon,
The young mother and old mother comprehend me,
The girl and the wife rest the needle a moment, and forget where they are,
They and all would resume what I have told them.

343. I have said that the Soul is not more than the body,
And I have said that the body is not more than the Soul,
And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is,
And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy, walks to his own funeral, dressed in his shroud,
And I or you, pocketless of a dime, may purchase the pick of the earth,
And to glance with an eye, or show a bean in its pod, confounds the learning of all times,
And there is no trade or employment but the young man following it may become a hero,

And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub
for the wheeled universe,
And any man or woman shall stand cool and
supercilious before a million universes.

344. And I call to mankind, Be not curious about God,
For I, who am curious about each, am not curious
about God,
No array of terms can say how much I am at peace
about God, and about death.

345. I hear and behold God in every object, yet under-
stand God not in the least,
Nor do I understand who there can be more won-
derful than myself.

346. Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four,
and each moment then,
In the faces of men and women I see God, and in
my own face in the glass,
I find letters from God dropped in the street — and
every one is signed by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that
others will punctually come forever and ever.

347. And as to you Death, and you bitter hug of mortality,
it is idle to try to alarm me.

348. To his work without flinching the accoucheur comes,
I see the elder-hand, pressing, receiving, supporting,
I recline by the sills of the exquisite flexible doors,
and mark the outlet, and mark the relief and
escape.

349. And as to you corpse, I think you are good manure,
but that does not offend me,
I smell the white roses sweet-scented and growing,
I reach to the leafy lips — I reach to the polished
breasts of melons.

350. And as to you life, I reckon you are the leavings of
many deaths,
No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times
before.

351. I hear you whispering there, O stars of heaven,
O suns! O grass of graves! O perpetual transfers and
promotions!
If you do not say anything, how can I say anything?

352. Of the turbid pool that lies in the autumn forest,
Of the moon that descends the steeps of the soughing
twilight,
Toss, sparkles of day and dusk! toss on the black
stems that decay in the muck!
Toss to the moaning gibberish of the dry limbs.

353. I ascend from the moon, I ascend from the night,
I perceive of the ghastly glimmer the sunbeams re-
flected,
And debouch to the steady and central from the
offspring great or small.

354. There is that in me — I do not know what it is — but
I know it is in me.

355. Wrenched and sweaty — calm and cool then my body
becomes,
I sleep — I sleep long.

356. I do not know it — it is without name — it is a word unsaid,
It is not in any dictionary, utterance, symbol.

357. Something it swings on more than the earth I swing on,
To it the creation is the friend whose embracing awakes me.

358. Perhaps I might tell more. Outlines! I plead for my brothers and sisters.

359. Do you see, O my brothers and sisters?
It is not chaos or death — it is form, union, plan — it is eternal life — it is HAPPINESS.

360. The past and present wilt — I have filled them, emptied them,
And proceed to fill my next fold of the future.

361. Listener up there! Here you! What have you to confide to me?
Look in my face, while I snuff the sidle of evening,
Talk honestly — no one else hears you, and I stay only a minute longer.

362. Do I contradict myself?
Very well, then, I contradict myself,
I am large — I contain multitudes.

363. I concentrate toward them that are nigh — I wait on the door-slab.

364. Who has done his day's work? Who will soonest be through with his supper?
Who wishes to walk with me?

365. Will you speak before I am gone? Will you prove
already too late?

366. The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me — he
complains of my gab and my loitering.

367. I too am not a bit tamed — I too am untranslatable,
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

368. The last scud of day holds back for me,
It flings my likeness, after the rest, and true as any,
on the shadowed wilds,
It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.

369. I depart as air — I shake my white locks at the
run-away sun,
I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags.

370. I bequeathe myself to the dirt, to grow from the
grass I love,
If you want me again, look for me under your boot-
soles.

371. You will hardly know who I am, or what I mean,
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,
And filter and fibre your blood.

372. Failing to fetch me at first, keep encouraged,
Missing me one place, search another,
I stop somewhere waiting for you.

CHANTS

DEMOCRATIC

AND

NATIVE AMERICAN.

Apostroph.

O mater! O fils!
O brood continental!
O flowers of the prairies!
O space boundless! O hum of mighty products!
O you teeming cities! O so invincible, turbulent, proud!
O race of the future! O women!
O fathers! O you men of passion and the storm!
O native power only! O beauty!
O yourself! O God! O divine average!
O you bearded roughs! O bards! O all those slumberers!
O arouse! the dawn-bird's throat sounds shrill! Do you not hear the cock crowing?
O, as I walk'd the beach, I heard the mournful notes foreboding a tempest — the low, oft-repeated shriek of the diver, the long-lived loon;

O I heard, and yet hear, angry thunder; — O you sailors! O ships! make quick preparation!
O from his masterful sweep, the warning cry of the eagle!
(Give way there, all! It is useless! Give up your spoils;)
O sarcasms! Propositions! (O if the whole world should prove indeed a sham, a sell!)
O I believe there is nothing real but America and freedom!
O to sternly reject all except Democracy!
O imperator! O who dare confront you and me?
O to promulgate our own! O to build for that which builds for mankind!
O feuillage! O North! O the slope drained by the Mexican sea!
O all, all inseparable — ages, ages, ages!
O a curse on him that would dissever this Union for any reason whatever!
O climates, labors! O good and evil! O death!
O you strong with iron and wood! O Personality!
O the village or place which has the greatest man or woman! even if it be only a few ragged huts;
O the city where women walk in public processions in the streets, the same as the men;
O a wan and terrible emblem, by me adopted!
O shapes arising! shapes of the future centuries!
O muscle and pluck forever for me!
O workmen and workwomen forever for me!
O farmers and sailors! O drivers of horses forever for me!
O I will make the new bardic list of trades and tools!
O you coarse and wilful! I love you!

O South! O longings for my dear home! O soft and sunny airs!
O pensive! O I must return where the palm grows and the mocking-bird sings, or else I die!
O equality! O organic compacts! I am come to be your born poet!
O whirl, contest, sounding and resounding! I am your poet, because I am part of you;
O days by-gone! Enthusiasts! Antecedents!
O vast preparations for These States! O years!
O what is now being sent forward thousands of years to come!
O mediums! O to teach! to convey the invisible faith!
To promulge real things! to journey through all The States!
O creation! O to-day! O laws! O unmitigated adoration!
O for mightier broods of orators, artists, and singers!
O for native songs! carpenter's, boatman's, ploughman's songs! shoemaker's songs!
O haughtiest growth of time! O free and extatic!
O what I, here, preparing, warble for!
O you hastening light! O the sun of the world will ascend, dazzling, and take his height — and you too will ascend;
O so amazing and so broad! up there resplendent, darting and burning;
O prophetic! O vision staggered with weight of light! with pouring glories!
O copious! O hitherto unequalled!
O Libertad! O compact! O union impossible to dissever!
O my Soul! O lips becoming tremulous, powerless!
O centuries, centuries yet ahead!

O voices of greater orators! I pause — I listen for you!
O you States! Cities! defiant of all outside authority! I spring at once into your arms! you I most love!
O you grand Presidentiads! I wait for you!
New history! New heroes! I project you!
Visions of poets! only you really last! O sweep on! sweep on!
O Death! O you striding there! O I cannot yet!
O heights! O infinitely too swift and dizzy yet!
O purged lumine! you threaten me more than I can stand!
O present! I return while yet I may to you!
O poets to come, I depend upon you!

A.

1. A NATION announcing itself, (many in one,)
I myself make the only growth by which I can be appreciated,
I reject none, accept all, reproduce all in my own forms.

2. A breed whose testimony is behavior,
What we are WE ARE — nativity is answer enough to objections;
We wield ourselves as a weapon is wielded,

We are powerful and tremendous in ourselves,
We are executive in ourselves — We are sufficient in the variety of ourselves,
We are the most beautiful to ourselves, and in ourselves,
Nothing is sinful to us outside of ourselves,
Whatever appears, whatever does not appear, we are beautiful or sinful in ourselves only.

3. Have you thought there could be but a single Supreme?
There can be any number of Supremes — One does not countervail another, any more than one eyesight countervails another, or one life countervails another.

4. All is eligible to all,
All is for individuals — All is for you,
No condition is prohibited, not God's or any,
If one is lost, you are inevitably lost.

5. All comes by the body — only health puts you rapport with the universe.

6. Produce great persons, the rest follows.

7. How dare a sick man, or an obedient man, write poems for These States?
Which is the theory or book that, for our purposes, is not diseased?

8. Piety and conformity to them that like!
Peace, obesity, allegiance, to them that like!

I am he who tauntingly compels men, women, nations, to leap from their seats and contend for their lives.

9. I am he who goes through the streets with a barbed tongue, questioning every one I meet — questioning you up there now:
Who are you, that wanted only to be told what you knew before?
Who are you, that wanted only a book to join you in your nonsense?

10. Are you, or would you be, better than all that has ever been before?
If you would be better than all that has ever been before, come listen to me, and not otherwise.

11. Fear grace — Fear delicatesse,
Fear the mellow sweet, the sucking of honey-juice,
Beware the advancing mortal ripening of nature,
Beware what precedes the decay of the ruggedness of states and men.

12. Ages, precedents, poems, have long been accumulating undirected materials,
America brings builders, and brings its own styles.

13. Mighty bards have done their work, and passed to other spheres,
One work forever remains, the work of surpassing all they have done.

14. America, curious toward foreign characters, stands by its own at all hazards,

Stands removed, spacious, composite sound,
Sees itself promulger of men and women, initiates the true use of precedents,
Does not repel them or the past, or what they have produced under their forms, or amid other politics, or amid the idea of castes, or the old religions,
Takes the lesson with calmness, perceives the corpse slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house,
Perceives that it waits a little while in the door — that it was fittest for its days,
That its life has descended to the stalwart and well-shaped heir who approaches,
And that he shall be fittest for his days.

15. Any period, one nation must lead,
One land must be the promise and reliance of the future.

16. These States are the amplest poem,
Here is not merely a nation, but a teeming nation of nations,
Here the doings of men correspond with the broad-cast doings of the day and night,
Here is what moves in magnificent masses, carelessly faithful of particulars,
Here are the roughs, beards, friendliness, combativeness, the Soul loves,
Here the flowing trains — here the crowds, equality, diversity, the Soul loves.

17. Race of races, and bards to corroborate!

Of them, standing among them, one lifts to the light his west-bred face,
To him the hereditary countenance bequeathed, both mother's and father's,
His first parts substances, earth, water, animals, trees,
Built of the common stock, having room for far and near,
Used to dispense with other lands, incarnating this land,
Attracting it body and Soul to himself, hanging on its neck with incomparable love,
Plunging his semitic muscle into its merits and demerits,
Making its geography, cities, beginnings, events, glories, defections, diversities, vocal in him,
Making its rivers, lakes, bays, embouchure in him,
Mississippi with yearly freshets and changing chutes — Missouri, Columbia, Ohio, Niagara, Hudson, spending themselves lovingly in him,
If the Atlantic coast stretch, or the Pacific coast stretch, he stretching with them north or south,
Spanning between them east and west, and touching whatever is between them,
Growths growing from him to offset the growth of pine, cedar, hemlock, live-oak, locust, chestnut, cypress, hickory, lime-tree, cotton-wood, tulip-tree, cactus, tamarind, orange, magnolia, persimmon,
Tangles as tangled in him as any cane-brake or swamp,
He likening sides and peaks of mountains, forests coated with transparent ice, and icicles hanging from the boughs,

Off him pasturage sweet and natural as savanna, upland, prairie,
Through him flights, songs, screams, answering those of the wild-pigeon, coot, fish-hawk, qua-bird, mocking-bird, condor, night-heron, eagle;
His spirit surrounding his country's spirit, unclosed to good and evil,
Surrounding the essences of real things, old times and present times,
Surrounding just found shores, islands, tribes of red aborigines,
Weather-beaten vessels, landings, settlements, the rapid stature and muscle,
The haughty defiance of the Year 1 — war, peace, the formation of the Constitution,
The separate States, the simple, elastic scheme, the immigrants,
The Union, always swarming with blatherers, and always calm and impregnable,
The unsurveyed interior, log-houses, clearings, wild animals, hunters, trappers;
Surrounding the multiform agriculture, mines, temperature, the gestation of new States,
Congress convening every Twelfth Month, the members duly coming up from the uttermost parts;
Surrounding the noble character of mechanics and farmers, especially the young men,
Responding their manners, speech, dress, friendships — the gait they have of persons who never knew how it felt to stand in the presence of superiors,
The freshness and candor of their physiognomy, the copiousness and decision of their phrenology,

The picturesque looseness of their carriage, their deathless attachment to freedom, their fierceness when wronged,
The fluency of their speech, their delight in music, their curiosity, good temper, and open-handedness — the whole composite make,
The prevailing ardor and enterprise, the large amativeness,
The perfect equality of the female with the male, the fluid movement of the population,
The superior marine, free commerce, fisheries, whaling, gold-digging,
Wharf-hemmed cities, railroad and steamboat lines, intersecting all points,
Factories, mercantile life, labor-saving machinery, the north-east, north-west, south-west,
Manhattan firemen, the Yankee swap, southern plantation life,
Slavery, the tremulous spreading of hands to shelter it — the stern opposition to it, which ceases only when it ceases.

18. For these and the like, their own voices! For these, space ahead!
Others take finish, but the Republic is ever constructive, and ever keeps vista;
Others adorn the past — but you, O, days of the present, I adorn you!
O days of the future, I believe in you!
O America, because you build for mankind, I build for you!
O well-beloved stone-cutters! I lead them who plan with decision and science,

I lead the present with friendly hand toward the future.

19. Bravas to States whose semitic impulses send wholesome children to the next age!
But damn that which spends itself on flaunters and dalliers, with no thought of the stain, pains, dismay, feebleness, it is bequeathing.

20. By great bards only can series of peoples and States be fused into the compact organism of one nation.

21. To hold men together by paper and seal, or by compulsion, is no account,
That only holds men together which is living principles, as the hold of the limbs of the body, or the fibres of plants.

22. Of all races and eras, These States, with veins full of poetical stuff, most need poets, and are to have the greatest, and use them the greatest,
Their Presidents shall not be their common referee so much as their poets shall.

23. Of mankind, the poet is the equable man,
Not in him, but off from him, things are grotesque, eccentric, fail of their full returns,
Nothing out of its place is good, nothing in its place is bad,
He bestows on every object or quality its fit proportions, neither more nor less,
He is the arbiter of the diverse, he is the key,

He is the equalizer of his age and land,
He supplies what wants supplying — he checks what wants checking,
In peace, out of him speaks the spirit of peace, large, rich, thrifty, building populous towns, encouraging agriculture, arts, commerce, lighting the study of man, the Soul, health, immortality, government,
In war, he is the best backer of the war — he fetches artillery as good as the engineer's — he can make every word he speaks draw blood;
The years straying toward infidelity, he withholds by his steady faith,
He is no arguer, he is judgment,
He judges not as the judge judges, but as the sun falling round a helpless thing;
As he sees the farthest he has the most faith,
His thoughts are the hymns of the praise of things,
In the dispute on God and eternity he is silent,
He sees eternity less like a play with a prologue and denouement,
He sees eternity in men and women — he does not see men and women as dreams or dots.

24. Of the idea of perfect and free individuals, the idea of These States, the bard walks in advance, leader of leaders,
The attitude of him cheers up slaves, and horrifies foreign despots.

25. Without extinction is Liberty! Without retrograde is Equality!
They live in the feelings of young men, and the best women,

Not for nothing have the indomitable heads of the earth been always ready to fall for Liberty!

26. Are YOU indeed for Liberty?
Are you a man who would assume a place to teach here, or lead here, or be a poet here?
The place is august — the terms obdurate.

27. Who would assume to teach here may well prepare himself, body and mind,
He may well survey, ponder, arm, fortify, harden, make lithe, himself,
He shall surely be questioned beforehand by me with many and stern questions.

28. Who are you, indeed, who would talk or sing in America?
Have you studied out MY LAND, its idioms and men?
Have you learned the physiology, phrenology, politics, geography, pride, freedom, friendship, of my land? its substratums and objects?
Have you considered the organic compact of the first day of the first year of the independence of The States, signed by the Commissioners, ratified by The States, and read by Washington at the head of the army?
Have you possessed yourself of the Federal Constitution?
Do you acknowledge Liberty with audible and absolute acknowledgment, and set slavery at nought for life and death?
Do you see who have left described processes and poems behind them, and assumed new ones?

Are you faithful to things? Do you teach whatever the land and sea, the bodies of men, womanhood, amativeness, angers, excesses, crimes, teach?

Have you sped through customs, laws, popularities?

Can you hold your hand against all seductions, follies, whirls, fierce contentions? Are you very strong? Are you of the whole people?

Are you not of some coterie? some school or religion?

Are you done with reviews and criticisms of life? animating to life itself?

Have you vivified yourself from the maternity of These States?

Have you sucked the nipples of the breasts of the mother of many children?

Have you too the old, ever-fresh, forbearance and impartiality?

Do you hold the like love for those hardening to maturity? for the last-born? little and big? and for the errant?

29. What is this you bring my America?

Is it uniform with my country?

Is it not something that has been better told or done before?

Have you not imported this, or the spirit of it, in some ship?

Is it a mere tale? a rhyme? a prettiness?

Has it never dangled at the heels of the poets, politicians, literats, of enemies' lands?

Does it not assume that what is notoriously gone is still here?

Does it answer universal needs? Will it improve manners?

Can your performance face the open fields and the sea-side?
Will it absorb into me as I absorb food, air, nobility, meanness — to appear again in my strength, gait, face?
Have real employments contributed to it? original makers — not amanuenses?
Does it meet modern discoveries, calibers, facts, face to face?
Does it respect me? Democracy? the Soul? to-day?
What does it mean to me? to American persons, progresses, cities? Chicago, Kanada, Arkansas? the planter, Yankee, Georgian, native, immigrant, sailors, squatters, old States, new States?
Does it encompass all The States, and the unexceptional rights of all the men and women of the earth, the genital impulse of These States?
Does it see behind the apparent custodians, the real custodians, standing, menacing, silent, the mechanics, Manhattanese, western men, southerners, significant alike in their apathy and in the promptness of their love?
Does it see what befalls and has always befallen each temporizer, patcher, outsider, partialist, alarmist, infidel, who has ever asked anything of America?
What mocking and scornful negligence?
The track strewed with the dust of skeletons?
By the roadside others disdainfully tossed?

30. Rhymes and rhymers pass away — poems distilled from other poems pass away,
The swarms of reflectors and the polite pass, and leave ashes;

Admirers, importers, obedient persons, make the soil of literature;
America justifies itself, give it time — no disguise can deceive it, or conceal from it — it is impassive enough,
Only toward the likes of itself will it advance to meet them,
If its poets appear, it will advance to meet them — there is no fear of mistake,
The proof of a poet shall be sternly deferred, till his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it.

31. He masters whose spirit masters — he tastes sweetest who results sweetest in the long run,
The blood of the brawn beloved of time is unconstraint,
In the need of poems, philosophy, politics, manners, engineering, an appropriate native grand-opera, shipcraft, any craft, he or she is greatest who contributes the greatest original practical example.

32. Already a nonchalant breed, silently emerging, fills the houses and streets,
People's lips salute only doers, lovers, satisfiers, positive knowers;
There will shortly be no more priests — I say their work is done,
Death is without emergencies here, but life is perpetual emergencies here,
Are your body, days, manners, superb? after death you shall be superb;

Friendship, self-esteem, justice, health, clear the way
with irresistible power;
How dare you place anything before a man?

33. Fall behind me, States!
A man, before all — myself, typical, before all.

34. Give me the pay I have served for!
Give me to speak beautiful words! take all the
rest;
I have loved the earth, sun, animals — I have despised
riches,
I have given alms to every one that asked, stood up
for the stupid and crazy, devoted my income
and labor to others,
I have hated tyrants, argued not concerning God,
had patience and indulgence toward the people,
taken off my hat to nothing known or unknown,
I have gone freely with powerful uneducated persons,
and with the young, and with the mothers of
families,
I have read these leaves to myself in the open air —
I have tried them by trees, stars, rivers,
I have dismissed whatever insulted my own Soul or
defiled my body,
I have claimed nothing to myself which I have not
carefully claimed for others on the same terms,
I have studied my land, its idioms and men,
I am willing to wait to be understood by the growth
of the taste of myself,
I reject none, I permit all,
Whom I have staid with once I have found longing
for me ever afterward.

34. I swear I begin to see the meaning of these things!
It is not the earth, it is not America, who is so great,
It is I who am great, or to be great — it is you, or any one,
It is to walk rapidly through civilizations, governments, theories, nature, poems, shows, to individuals.

35. Underneath all are individuals,
I swear nothing is good to me now that ignores individuals!
The American compact is altogether with individuals,
The only government is that which makes minute of individuals,
The whole theory of the universe is directed to one single individual — namely, to You.

36. Underneath all is nativity,
I swear I will stand by my own nativity — pious or impious, so be it;
I swear I am charmed with nothing except nativity,
Men, women, cities, nations, are only beautiful from nativity.

37. Underneath all is the need of the expression of love for men and women,
I swear I have had enough of mean and impotent modes of expressing love for men and women,
After this day I take my own modes of expressing love for men and women.

38. I swear I will have each quality of my race in myself,

Talk as you like, he only suits These States whose manners favor the audacity and sublime turbulence of The States.

39. Underneath the lessons of things, spirits, nature, governments, ownerships, I swear I perceive other lessons,
Underneath all to me is myself — to you, yourself, (the same monotonous old song,)
If all had not kernels for you and me, what were it to you and me?

40. O I see now, flashing, that this America is only you and me,
Its power, weapons, testimony, are you and me,
Its roughs, beards, haughtiness, ruggedness, are you and me,
Its ample geography, the sierras, the prairies, Mississippi, Huron, Colorado, Boston, Toronto, Raleigh, Nashville, Havana, are you and me,
Its settlements, wars, the organic compact, peace, Washington, the Federal Constitution, are you and me,
Its young men's manners, speech, dress, friendships, are you and me,
Its crimes, lies, thefts, defections, slavery, are you and me,
Its Congress is you and me — the officers, capitols, armies, ships, are you and me,
Its endless gestations of new States are you and me,
Its inventions, science, schools, are you and me,
Its deserts, forests, clearings, log-houses, hunters, are you and me,

Natural and artificial are you and me,
Freedom, language, poems, employments, are you and me,
Failures, successes, births, deaths, are you and me,
Past, present, future, are only you and me.

41. I swear I dare not shirk any part of myself,
Not any part of America, good or bad,
Not my body — not friendship, hospitality, procreation,
Not my Soul, nor the last explanation of prudence,
Not the similitude that interlocks me with all identities that exist, or ever have existed,
Not faith, sin, defiance, nor any disposition or duty of myself,
Not the promulgation of Liberty — not to cheer up slaves and horrify despots,
Not to build for that which builds for mankind,
Not to balance ranks, complexions, creeds, and the sexes,
Not to justify science, nor the march of equality,
Nor to feed the arrogant blood of the brawn beloved of time.

42. I swear I am for those that have never been mastered!
For men and women whose tempers have never been mastered,
For those whom laws, theories, conventions, can never master.

43. I swear I am for those who walk abreast with the whole earth!
Who inaugurate one to inaugurate all.

44. I swear I will not be outfaced by irrational things!
I will penetrate what it is in them that is sarcastic upon me!
I will make cities and civilizations defer to me!
(This is what I have learnt from America — it is the amount — and it I teach again.)

45. I will confront these shows of the day and night!
I will know if I am to be less than they!
I will see if I am not as majestic as they!
I will see if I am not as subtle and real as they!
I will see if I am to be less generous than they!

46. I will see if I have no meaning, while the houses and ships have meaning!
I will see if the fishes and birds are to be enough for themselves, and I am not to be enough for myself.

47. I match my spirit against yours, you orbs, growths, mountains, brutes,
Copious as you are, I absorb you all in myself, and become the master myself.

48. The Many In One — what is it finally except myself?
These States — what are they except myself?

49. I have learned why the earth is gross, tantalizing, wicked — it is for my sake,
I take you to be mine, you beautiful, terrible, rude forms.

CHANTS DEMOCRATIC.

2.

1. Broad-axe, shapely, naked, wan!
Head from the mother's bowels drawn!
Wooded flesh and metal bone! limb only one and lip only one!
Gray-blue leaf by red-heat grown! helve produced from a little seed sown!
Resting the grass amid and upon,
To be leaned, and to lean on.

2. Strong shapes, and attributes of strong shapes — masculine trades, sights and sounds,
Long varied train of an emblem, dabs of music,
Fingers of the organist skipping staccato over the keys of the great organ.

3. Welcome are all earth's lands, each for its kind,
Welcome are lands of pine and oak,
Welcome are lands of the lemon and fig,
Welcome are lands of gold,
Welcome are lands of wheat and maize — welcome those of the grape,
Welcome are lands of sugar and rice,
Welcome the cotton-lands — welcome those of the white potato and sweet potato,
Welcome are mountains, flats, sands, forests, prairies,

Welcome the rich borders of rivers, table-lands, openings,
Welcome the measureless grazing lands — welcome the teeming soil of orchards, flax, honey, hemp,
Welcome just as much the other more hard-faced lands,
Lands rich as lands of gold, or wheat and fruit lands,
Lands of mines, lands of the manly and rugged ores,
Lands of coal, copper, lead, tin, zinc,
LANDS OF IRON! lands of the make of the axe!

4. The log at the wood-pile, the axe supported by it,
The sylvan hut, the vine over the doorway, the space cleared for a garden,
The irregular tapping of rain down on the leaves, after the storm is lulled,
The wailing and moaning at intervals, the thought of the sea,
The thought of ships struck in the storm, and put on their beam-ends, and the cutting away of masts;
The sentiment of the huge timbers of old-fashioned houses and barns;
The remembered print or narrative, the voyage at a venture of men, families, goods,
The disembarkation, the founding of a new city,
The voyage of those who sought a New England and found it — the outset anywhere,
The settlements of the Arkansas, Colorado, Ottawa, Willamette,
The slow progress, the scant fare, the axe, rifle, saddle-bags;
The beauty of all adventurous and daring persons,
The beauty of wood-boys and wood-men, with their clear untrimmed faces,

The beauty of independence, departure, actions that rely on themselves,
The American contempt for statutes and ceremonies, the boundless impatience of restraint,
The loose drift of character, the inkling through random types, the solidification;
The butcher in the slaughter-house, the hands aboard schooners and sloops, the raftsman, the pioneer,
Lumbermen in their winter camp, daybreak in the woods, stripes of snow on the limbs of trees, the occasional snapping,
The glad clear sound of one's own voice, the merry song, the natural life of the woods, the strong day's work,
The blazing fire at night, the sweet taste of supper, the talk, the bed of hemlock boughs, and the bear-skin;
The house-builder at work in cities or anywhere,
The preparatory jointing, squaring, sawing, mortising,
The hoist-up of beams, the push of them in their places, laying them regular,
Setting the studs by their tenons in the mortises, according as they were prepared,
The blows of mallets and hammers, the attitudes of the men, their curved limbs,
Bending, standing, astride the beams, driving in pins, holding on by posts and braces,
The hooked arm over the plate, the other arm wielding the axe,
The floor-men forcing the planks close, to be nailed,
Their postures bringing their weapons downward on the bearers,

The echoes resounding through the vacant building;
The huge store-house carried up in the city, well under way,
The six framing-men, two in the middle and two at each end, carefully bearing on their shoulders a heavy stick for a cross-beam,
The crowded line of masons with trowels in their right hands, rapidly laying the long side-wall, two hundred feet from front to rear,
The flexible rise and fall of backs, the continual click of the trowels striking the bricks,
The bricks, one after another, each laid so workmanlike in its place, and set with a knock of the trowel-handle,
The piles of materials, the mortar on the mortar-boards, and the steady replenishing by the hod-men;
Spar-makers in the spar-yard, the swarming row of well-grown apprentices,
The swing of their axes on the square-hewed log, shaping it toward the shape of a mast,
The brisk short crackle of the steel driven slantingly into the pine,
The butter-colored chips flying off in great flakes and slivers,
The limber motion of brawny young arms and hips in easy costumes;
The constructor of wharves, bridges, piers, bulk-heads, floats, stays against the sea;
The city fireman — the fire that suddenly bursts forth in the close-packed square,
The arriving engines, the hoarse shouts, the nimble stepping and daring,

The strong command through the fire-trumpets, the falling in line, the rise and fall of the arms forcing the water,
The slender, spasmic blue-white jets — the bringing to bear of the hooks and ladders, and their execution,
The crash and cut away of connecting wood-work, or through floors, if the fire smoulders under them,
The crowd with their lit faces, watching — the glare and dense shadows;
The forger at his forge-furnace, and the user of iron after him,
The maker of the axe large and small, and the welder and temperer,
The chooser breathing his breath on the cold steel, and trying the edge with his thumb,
The one who clean-shapes the handle and sets it firmly in the socket,
The shadowy processions of the portraits of the past users also,
The primal patient mechanics, the architects and engineers,
The far-off Assyrian edifice and Mizra edifice,
The Roman lictors preceding the consuls,
The antique European warrior with his axe in combat,
The uplifted arm, the clatter of blows on the helmeted head,
The death-howl, the limpsey tumbling body, the rush of friend and foe thither,
The siege of revolted lieges determined for liberty,
The summons to surrender, the battering at castle gates, the truce and parley,

The sack of an old city in its time,
The bursting in of mercenaries and bigots tumultuously and disorderly,
Roar, flames, blood, drunkenness, madness,
Goods freely rifled from houses and temples, screams of women in the gripe of brigands,
Craft and thievery of camp-followers, men running, old persons despairing,
The hell of war, the cruelties of creeds,
The list of all executive deeds and words, just or unjust,
The power of personality, just or unjust.

5. Muscle and pluck forever!
What invigorates life, invigorates death,
And the dead advance as much as the living advance,
And the future is no more uncertain than the present,
And the roughness of the earth and of man encloses as much as the delicatesse of the earth and of man,
And nothing endures but personal qualities.

6. What do you think endures?
Do you think the greatest city endures?
Or a teeming manufacturing state? or a prepared constitution? or the best built steamships?
Or hotels of granite and iron? or any chef-d'œuvres of engineering, forts, armaments?

7. Away! These are not to be cherished for themselves,
They fill their hour, the dancers dance, the musicians play for them,
The show passes, all does well enough of course,
All does very well till one flash of defiance.

8. The greatest city is that which has the greatest man or woman,
If it be a few ragged huts, it is still the greatest city in the whole world.

9. The place where the greatest city stands is not the place of stretched wharves, docks, manufactures, deposits of produce,
Nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new comers, or the anchor-lifters of the departing,
Nor the place of the tallest and costliest buildings, or shops selling goods from the rest of the earth,
Nor the place of the best libraries and schools — nor the place where money is plentiest,
Nor the place of the most numerous population.

10. Where the city stands with the brawniest breed of orators and bards,
Where the city stands that is beloved by these, and loves them in return, and understands them,
Where these may be seen going every day in the streets, with their arms familiar to the shoulders of their friends,
Where no monuments exist to heroes, but in the common words and deeds,
Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place,
Where behavior is the finest of the fine arts,
Where the men and women think lightly of the laws,
Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases,
Where the populace rise at once against the never-ending audacity of elected persons,

Where fierce men and women pour forth, as the sea to the whistle of death pours its sweeping and unript waves,
Where outside authority enters always after the precedence of inside authority,
Where the citizen is always the head and ideal — and President, Mayor, Governor, and what not, are agents for pay,
Where children are taught from the jump that they are to be laws to themselves, and to depend on themselves,
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs,
Where speculations on the Soul are encouraged,
Where women walk in public processions in the streets, the same as the men,
Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men, and are appealed to by the orators, the same as the men,
Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,
There the greatest city stands.

11. How beggarly appear poems, arguments, orations, before an electric deed!
How the floridness of the materials of cities shrivels before a man's or woman's look!

12. All waits, or goes by default, till a strong being appears;
A strong being is the proof of the race, and of the ability of the universe,

When he or she appears, materials are overawed,
The dispute on the Soul stops,
The old customs and phrases are confronted, turned back, or laid away.

13. What is your money-making now? What can it do now?
What is your respectability now?
What are your theology, tuition, society, traditions, statute-books now?
Where are your jibes of being now?
Where are your cavils about the Soul now?

14. Was that your best? Were those your vast and solid?
Riches, opinions, politics, institutions, to part obediently from the path of one man or woman!
The centuries, and all authority, to be trod under the foot-soles of one man or woman!

15. — A sterile landscape covers the ore — there is as good as the best, for all the forbidding appearance,
There is the mine, there are the miners,
The forge-furnace is there, the melt is accomplished, the hammers-men are at hand with their tongs and hammers,
What always served and always serves, is at hand.

16. Than this nothing has better served — it has served all,
Served the fluent-tongued and subtle-sensed Greek, and long ere the Greek,

Served in building the buildings that last longer than any,
Served the Hebrew, the Persian, the most ancient Hindostanee,
Served the mound-raiser on the Mississippi — served those whose relics remain in Central America,
Served Albic temples in woods or on plains, with unhewn pillars, and the druids, and the bloody body laid in the hollow of the great stone,
Served the artificial clefts, vast, high, silent, on the snow-covered hills of Scandinavia,
Served those who, time out of mind, made on the granite walls rough sketches of the sun, moon, stars, ships, ocean-waves,
Served the paths of the irruptions of the Goths — served the pastoral tribes and nomads,
Served the incalculably distant Kelt — served the hardy pirates of the Baltic,
Served before any of those, the venerable and harmless men of Ethiopia,
Served the making of helms for the galleys of pleasure, and the making of those for war,
Served all great works on land, and all great works on the sea,
For the mediæval ages, and before the mediæval ages,
Served not the living only, then as now, but served the dead.

17. I see the European headsman,
He stands masked, clothed in red, with huge legs, and strong naked arms,
And leans on a ponderous axe.

18. Whom have you slaughtered lately, European headsman?
Whose is that blood upon you, so wet and sticky?

19. I see the clear sunsets of the martyrs,
I see from the scaffolds the descending ghosts,
Ghosts of dead lords, uncrowned ladies, impeached ministers, rejected kings,
Rivals, traitors, poisoners, disgraced chieftains, and the rest.

20. I see those who in any land have died for the good cause,
The seed is spare, nevertheless the crop shall never run out,
(Mind you, O foreign kings, O priests, the crop shall never run out.)

21. I see the blood washed entirely away from the axe,
Both blade and helve are clean,
They spirt no more the blood of European nobles—they clasp no more the necks of queens.

22. I see the headsman withdraw and become useless,
I see the scaffold untrodden and mouldy—I see no longer any axe upon it,
I see the mighty and friendly emblem of the power of my own race, the newest largest race.

23. America! I do not vaunt my love for you,
I have what I have.

24. The axe leaps!
The solid forest gives fluid utterances,

They tumble forth, they rise and form,
Hut, tent, landing, survey,
Flail, plough, pick, crowbar, spade,
Shingle, rail, prop, wainscot, jamb, lath, panel, gable,
Citadel, ceiling, saloon, academy, organ, exhibition-house, library,
Cornice, trellis, pilaster, balcony, window, shutter, turret, porch,
Hoe, rake, pitch-fork, pencil, wagon, staff, saw, jack-plane, mallet, wedge, rounce,
Chair, tub, hoop, table, wicket, vane, sash, floor,
Work-box, chest, stringed instrument, boat, frame, and what not,
Capitols of States, and capitol of the nation of States,
Long stately rows in avenues, hospitals for orphans or for the poor or sick,
Manhattan steamboats and clippers, taking the measure of all seas.

25. The shapes arise!
Shapes of the using of axes anyhow, and the users, and all that neighbors them,
Cutters down of wood, and haulers of it to the Penobscot, or Kennebec,
Dwellers in cabins among the Californian mountains, or by the little lakes, or on the Columbia,
Dwellers south on the banks of the Gila or Rio Grande — friendly gatherings, the characters and fun,
Dwellers up north in Minnesota and by the Yellowstone river — dwellers on coasts and off coasts,
Seal-fishers, whalers, arctic seamen breaking passages through the ice.

26. The shapes arise!
Shapes of factories, arsenals, foundries, markets,
Shapes of the two-threaded tracks of railroads,
Shapes of the sleepers of bridges, vast frameworks, girders, arches,
Shapes of the fleets of barges, tows, lake craft, river craft.

27. The shapes arise!
Ship-yards and dry-docks along the Eastern and Western Seas, and in many a bay and by-place,
The live-oak kelsons, the pine planks, the spars, the hackmatack-roots for knees,
The ships themselves on their ways, the tiers of scaffolds, the workmen busy outside and inside,
The tools lying around, the great auger and little auger, the adze, bolt, line, square, gouge, and bead-plane.

28. The shapes arise!
The shape measured, sawed, jacked, joined, stained,
The coffin-shape for the dead to lie within in his shroud;
The shape got out in posts, in the bedstead posts, in the posts of the bride's bed,
The shape of the little trough, the shape of the rockers beneath, the shape of the babe's cradle,
The shape of the floor-planks, the floor-planks for dancers' feet,
The shape of the planks of the family home, the home of the friendly parents and children,
The shape of the roof of the home of the happy young man and woman, the roof over the well-married young man and woman,

The roof over the supper joyously cooked by the chaste wife, and joyously eaten by the chaste husband, content after his day's work.

29. The shapes arise!
The shape of the prisoner's place in the court-room, and of him or her seated in the place,
The shape of the pill-box, the disgraceful ointment-box, the nauseous application, and him or her applying it,
The shape of the liquor-bar leaned against by the young rum-drinker and the old rum-drinker,
The shape of the shamed and angry stairs, trod by sneaking footsteps,
The shape of the sly settee, and the adulterous unwholesome couple,
The shape of the gambling-board with its devilish winnings and losings,
The shape of the slats of the bed of a corrupted body, the bed of the corruption of gluttony or alcoholic drinks,
The shape of the step-ladder for the convicted and sentenced murderer, the murderer with haggard face and pinioned arms,
The sheriff at hand with his deputies, the silent and white-lipped crowd, the sickening dangling of the rope.

30. The shapes arise!
Shapes of doors giving so many exits and entrances,
The door passing the dissevered friend, flushed, and in haste,

The door that admits good news and bad news,
The door whence the son left home, confident and puffed up,
The door he entered again from a long and scandalous absence, diseased, broken down, without innocence, without means.

31. Their shapes arise, above all the rest — the shapes of full-sized men,
Men taciturn yet loving, used to the open air, and the manners of the open air,
Saying their ardor in native forms, saying the old response,
Take what I have then, (saying fain,) take the pay you approached for,
Take the white tears of my blood, if that is what you are after.

32. Her shape arises,
She, less guarded than ever, yet more guarded than ever,
The gross and soiled she moves among do not make her gross and soiled,
She knows the thoughts as she passes — nothing is concealed from her,
She is none the less considerate or friendly therefore,
She is the best-beloved — it is without exception — she has no reason to fear, and she does not fear,
Oaths, quarrels, hiccupped songs, proposals, smutty expressions, are idle to her as she passes,
She is silent — she is possessed of herself — they do not offend her,

She receives them as the laws of nature receive them
— she is strong,
She too is a law of nature — there is no law stronger
than she is.

33. His shape arises,
Arrogant, masculine, näive, rowdyish,
Laugher, weeper, worker, idler, citizen, countryman,
Saunterer of woods, stander upon hills, summer
swimmer in rivers or by the sea,
Of pure American breed, of reckless health, his body
perfect, free from taint from top to toe, free
forever from headache and dyspepsia, clean-
breathed,
Ample-limbed, a good feeder, weight a hundred and
eighty pounds, full-blooded, six feet high, forty
inches round the breast and back,
Countenance sun-burnt, bearded, calm, unrefined,
Reminder of animals, meeter of savage and gentleman
on equal terms,
Attitudes lithe and erect, costume free, neck gray
and open, of slow movement on foot,
Passer of his right arm round the shoulders of his
friends, companion of the street,
Persuader always of people to give him their sweetest
touches, and never their meanest,
A Manhattanese bred, fond of Brooklyn, fond of
Broadway, fond of the life of the wharves and
the great ferries,
Enterer everywhere, welcomed everywhere, easily
understood after all,
Never offering others, always offering himself, corrob-
orating his phrenology,

Voluptuous, inhabitive, combative, conscientious,
alimentive, intuitive, of copious friendship,
sublimity, firmness, self-esteem, comparison,
individuality, form, locality, eventuality,
Avowing by life, manners, works, to contribute illustrations of results of The States,
Teacher of the unquenchable creed, namely, egotism,
Inviter of others continually henceforth to try their strength against his.

31. The main shapes arise!
Shapes of Democracy, final — result of centuries,
Shapes of those that do not joke with life, but are in earnest with life,
Shapes, ever projecting other shapes,
Shapes of a hundred Free States, begetting another hundred north and south,
Shapes of turbulent manly cities,
Shapes of an untamed breed of young men, and natural persons,
Shapes of the women fit for These States,
Shapes of the composition of all the varieties of the earth,
Shapes of the friends and home-givers of the whole earth,
Shapes bracing the whole earth, and braced with the whole earth.

CHANTS DEMOCRATIC.

3.

1. Come closer to me,
Push closer, my lovers, and take the best I possess,
Yield closer and closer, and give me the best you possess.

2. This is unfinished business with me — How is it with you?
I was chilled with the cold types, cylinder, wet paper between us.

3. Male and Female!
I pass so poorly with paper and types, I must pass with the contact of bodies and souls.

4. American masses!
I do not thank you for liking me as I am, and liking the touch of me — I know that it is good for you to do so.

5. Workmen and Workwomen!
Were all educations, practical and ornamental, well displayed out of me, what would it amount to?
Were I as the head teacher, charitable proprietor, wise statesman, what would it amount to?

Were I to you as the boss employing and paying you, would that satisfy you?

6. The learned, virtuous, benevolent, and the usual terms,
A man like me, and never the usual terms.

7. Neither a servant nor a master am I,
I take no sooner a large price than a small price — I will have my own, whoever enjoys me,
I will be even with you, and you shall be even with me.

8. If you stand at work in a shop, I stand as nigh as the nighest in the same shop,
If you bestow gifts on your brother or dearest friend, I demand as good as your brother or dearest friend,
If your lover, husband, wife, is welcome by day or night, I must be personally as welcome,
If you become degraded, criminal, ill, then I become so for your sake,
If you remember your foolish and outlawed deeds, do you think I cannot remember my own foolish and outlawed deeds? plenty of them;
If you carouse at the table, I carouse at the opposite side of the table,
If you meet some stranger in the streets, and love him or her, do I not often meet strangers in the street, and love them?
If you see a good deal remarkable in me, I see just as much, perhaps more, in you.

9. Why, what have you thought of yourself?
Is it you then that thought yourself less?
Is it you that thought the President greater than you?
Or the rich better off than you? or the educated wiser than you?

10. Because you are greasy or pimpled, or that you was once drunk, or a thief, or diseased, or rheumatic, or a prostitute, or are so now, or from frivolity or impotence, or that you are no scholar, and never saw your name in print, do you give in that you are any less immortal?

11. Souls of men and women! it is not you I call unseen, unheard, untouchable and untouching,
It is not you I go argue pro and con about, and to settle whether you are alive or no,
I own publicly who you are, if nobody else owns — I see and hear you, and what you give and take,
What is there you cannot give and take?

12. I see not merely that you are polite or white-faced, married, single, citizens of old States, citizens of new States,
Eminent in some profession, a lady or gentleman in a parlor, or dressed in the jail uniform, or pulpit uniform;
Grown, half-grown, and babe, of this country and every country, indoors and outdoors, one just as much as the other, I see,
And all else is behind or through them.

13. The wife — and she is not one jot less than the husband,
The daughter — and she is just as good as the son,
The mother — and she is every bit as much as the father.

14. Offspring of those not rich, boys apprenticed to trades,
Young fellows working on farms, and old fellows working on farms,
The näive, the simple and hardy, he going to the polls to vote, he who has a good time, and he has who a bad time,
Mechanics, southerners, new arrivals, laborers, sailors, man-o'wars-men, merchantmen, coasters,
All these I see — but nigher and farther the same I see,
None shall escape me, and none shall wish to escape me.

15. I bring what you much need, yet always have,
Not money, amours, dress, eating, but as good;
I send no agent or medium, offer no representative of value, but offer the value itself.

16. There is something that comes home to one now and perpetually,
It is not what is printed, preached, discussed — it eludes discussion and print,
It is not to be put in a book — it is not in this book,
It is for you, whoever you are — it is no farther from you than your hearing and sight are from you,

It is hinted by nearest, commonest, readiest — it is not them, though it is endlessly provoked by them, (what is there ready and near you now?)

17. You may read in many languages, yet read nothing about it,
You may read the President's Message, and read nothing about it there,
Nothing in the reports from the State department or Treasury department, or in the daily papers or the weekly papers,
Or in the census returns, assessors' returns, prices current, or any accounts of stock.

18. The sun and stars that float in the open air — the apple-shaped earth, and we upon it — surely the drift of them is something grand!
I do not know what it is, except that it is grand, and that it is happiness,
And that the enclosing purport of us here is not a speculation, or bon-mot, or reconnoissance,
And that it is not something which by luck may turn out well for us, and without luck must be a failure for us,
And not something which may yet be retracted in a certain contingency.

19. The light and shade, the curious sense of body and identity, the greed that with perfect complaisance devours all things, the endless pride and out-stretching of man, unspeakable joys and sorrows,
The wonder every one sees in every one else he sees, and the wonders that fill each minute of time forever, and each acre of surface and space forever,

Have you reckoned them for a trade, or farm-work? or for the profits of a store? or to achieve yourself a position? or to fill a gentleman's leisure, or a lady's leisure?

20. Have you reckoned the landscape took substance and form that it might be painted in a picture?
Or men and women that they might be written of, and songs sung?
Or the attraction of gravity, and the great laws and harmonious combinations, and the fluids of the air, as subjects for the savans?
Or the brown land and the blue sea for maps and charts?
Or the stars to be put in constellations and named fancy names?
Or that the growth of seeds is for agricultural tables, or agriculture itself?

21. Old institutions — these arts, libraries, legends, collections, and the practice handed along in manufactures — will we rate them so high?
Will we rate our cash and business high? I have no objection,
I rate them high as the highest — then a child born of a woman and man I rate beyond all rate.

22. We thought our Union grand, and our Constitution grand,
I do not say they are not grand and good, for they are,
I am this day just as much in love with them as you,

Then I am in love with you, and with all my fellows upon the earth.

23. We consider bibles and religions divine — I do not say they are not divine,
I say they have all grown out of you, and may grow out of you still,
It is not they who give the life — it is you who give the life,
Leaves are not more shed from the trees, or trees from the earth, than they are shed out of you.

24. The sum of all known reverence I add up in you, whoever you are,
The President is there in the White House for you — it is not you who are here for him,
The Secretaries act in their bureaus for you — not you here for them,
The Congress convenes every Twelfth Month for you,
Laws, courts, the forming of States, the charters of cities, the going and coming of commerce and mails, are all for you.

25. All doctrines, all politics and civilization, exurge from you,
All sculpture and monuments, and anything inscribed anywhere, are tallied in you,
The gist of histories and statistics as far back as the records reach, is in you this hour, and myths and tales the same,
If you were not breathing and walking here, where would they all be?

The most renowned poems would be ashes, orations and plays would be vacuums.

26. All architecture is what you do to it when you look upon it,
Did you think it was in the white or gray stone? or the lines of the arches and cornices?

27. All music is what awakes from you, when you are reminded by the instruments,
It is not the violins and the cornets — it is not the oboe nor the beating drums, nor the score of the baritone singer singing his sweet romanza — nor that of the men's chorus, nor that of the women's chorus,
It is nearer and farther than they.

28. Will the whole come back then?
Can each see signs of the best by a look in the looking-glass? is there nothing greater or more?
Does all sit there with you, and here with me?

29. The old, forever-new things — you foolish child! the closest, simplest things, this moment with you,
Your person, and every particle that relates to your person,
The pulses of your brain, waiting their chance and encouragement at every deed or sight,
Anything you do in public by day, and anything you do in secret between-days,
What is called right and what is called wrong — what you behold or touch, or what causes your anger or wonder,

The ankle-chain of the slave, the bed of the bed-house, the cards of the gambler, the plates of the forger,

What is seen or learnt in the street, or intuitively learnt,

What is learnt in the public school, spelling, reading, writing, ciphering, the black-board, the teacher's diagrams,

The panes of the windows, all that appears through them, the going forth in the morning, the aimless spending of the day,

(What is it that you made money? What is it that you got what you wanted?)

The usual routine, the work-shop, factory, yard, office, store, desk,

The jaunt of hunting or fishing, and the life of hunting or fishing,

Pasture-life, foddering, milking, herding, and all the personnel and usages,

The plum-orchard, apple-orchard, gardening, seedlings, cuttings, flowers, vines,

Grains, manures, marl, clay, loam, the subsoil plough, the shovel, pick, rake, hoe, irrigation, draining,

The curry-comb, the horse-cloth, the halter, bridle, bits, the very wisps of straw,

The barn and barn-yard, the bins, mangers, mows, racks,

Manufactures, commerce, engineering, the building of cities, every trade carried on there, and the implements of every trade,

The anvil, tongs, hammer, the axe and wedge, the square, mitre, jointer, smoothing-plane,

The plumbob, trowel, level, the wall-scaffold, the work of walls and ceilings, or any mason-work,
The steam-engine, lever, crank, axle, piston, shaft, air-pump, boiler, beam, pulley, hinge, flange, band, bolt, throttle, governors, up and down rods,
The ship's compass, the sailor's tarpaulin, the stays and lanyards, the ground tackle for anchoring or mooring, the life-boat for wrecks,
The sloop's tiller, the pilot's wheel and bell, the yacht or fish-smack — the great gay-pennanted three-hundred-foot steamboat, under full headway, with her proud fat breasts, and her delicate swift-flashing paddles,
The trail, line, hooks, sinkers, and the seine, and hauling the seine,
The arsenal, small-arms, rifles, gunpowder, shot, caps, wadding, ordnance for war, and carriages;
Every-day objects, house-chairs, carpet, bed, counterpane of the bed, him or her sleeping at night, wind blowing, indefinite noises,
The snow-storm or rain-storm, the tow-trowsers, the lodge-hut in the woods, the still-hunt,
City and country, fire-place, candle, gas-light, heater, aqueduct,
The message of the Governor, Mayor, Chief of Police — the dishes of breakfast, dinner, supper,
The bunk-room, the fire-engine, the string-team, the car or truck behind,
The paper I write on or you write on, every word we write, every cross and twirl of the pen, and the curious way we write what we think, yet very faintly,

The directory, the detector, the ledger, the books in ranks on the book-shelves, the clock attached to the wall,

The ring on your finger, the lady's wristlet, the scent-powder, the druggist's vials and jars, the draught of lager-beer,

The etui of surgical instruments, the etui of oculist's or aurist's instruments, or dentist's instruments,

The permutating lock that can be turned and locked as many different ways as there are minutes in a year,

Glass-blowing, nail-making, salt-making, tin-roofing, shingle-dressing, candle-making, lock-making and hanging,

Ship-carpentering, dock-building, fish-curing, ferrying, stone-breaking, flagging of side-walks by flaggers,

The pump, the pile-driver, the great derrick, the coal-kiln and brick-kiln,

Coal-mines, all that is down there, the lamps in the darkness, echoes, songs, what meditations, what vast native thoughts looking through smutch'd faces,

Iron-works, forge-fires in the mountains, or by river-banks, men around feeling the melt with huge crowbars — lumps of ore, the due combining of ore, limestone, coal — the blast-furnace and the puddling-furnace, the loup-lump at the bottom of the melt at last — the rolling-mill, the stumpy bars of pig-iron, the strong clean-shaped T rail for railroads,

Oil-works, silk-works, white-lead-works, the sugar-house, steam-saws, the great mills and factories,

Lead-mines, and all that is done in lead-mines, or with the lead afterward,

Copper-mines, the sheets of copper, and what is formed out of the sheets, and all the work in forming it,

Stone-cutting, shapely trimmings for façades, or window or door lintels — the mallet, the tooth-chisel, the jib to protect the thumb,

Oakum, the oakum-chisel, the caulking-iron — the kettle of boiling vault-cement, and the fire under the kettle,

The cotton-bale, the stevedore's hook, the saw and buck of the sawyer, the screen of the coal-screener, the mould of the moulder, the working-knife of the butcher, the ice-saw, and all the work with ice,

The four-double cylinder press, the hand-press, the frisket and tympan, the compositor's stick and rule, type-setting, making up the forms, all the work of newspaper counters, folders, carriers, news-men,

The implements for daguerreotyping — the tools of the rigger, grappler, sail-maker, block-maker,

Goods of gutta-percha, papier-mache, colors, brushes, brush-making, glazier's implements,

The veneer and glue-pot, the confectioner's ornaments, the decanter and glasses, the shears and flat-iron,

The awl and knee-strap, the pint measure and quart measure, the counter and stool, the writing-pen of quill or metal — the making of all sorts of edged tools,

The ladders and hanging-ropes of the gymnasium, manly exercises, the game of base-ball, running, leaping, pitching quoits,

The designs for wall-papers, oil-cloths, carpets, the fancies for goods for women, the book-binder's stamps,

The brewery, brewing, the malt, the vats, every thing that is done by brewers, also by wine-makers, also vinegar-makers,

Leather-dressing, coach-making, boiler-making, rope-twisting, distilling, sign-painting, lime-burning, coopering, cotton-picking — electro-plating, electrotyping, stereotyping,

Stave-machines, planing-machines, reaping-machines, ploughing-machines, thrashing-machines, steam-wagons,

The cart of the carman, the omnibus, the ponderous dray,

The wires of the electric telegraph stretched on land, or laid at the bottom of the sea, and then the message in an instant from a thousand miles off,

The snow-plough, and two engines pushing it — the ride in the express-train of only one car, the swift go through a howling storm — the locomotive, and all that is done about a locomotive,

The bear-hunt or coon-hunt — the bonfire of shavings in the open lot in the city, and the crowd of children watching,

The blows of the fighting-man, the upper-cut, and one-two-three,

Pyrotechny, letting off colored fire-works at night, fancy figures and jets,

Shop-windows, coffins in the sexton's ware-room, fruit on the fruit-stand — beef in the butcher's stall, the slaughter-house of the butcher, the butcher in his killing-clothes,

The area of pens of live pork, the killing-hammer, the hog-hook, the scalder's tub, gutting, the cutter's cleaver, the packer's maul, and the plenteous winter-work of pork-packing,

Flour-works, grinding of wheat, rye, maize, rice — the barrels and the half and quarter barrels, the loaded barges, the high piles on wharves and levees,

Bread and cakes in the bakery, the milliner's ribbons, the dress-maker's patterns, the tea-table, the home-made sweetmeats;

Cheap literature, maps, charts, lithographs, daily and weekly newspapers,

The column of wants in the one-cent paper, the news by telegraph, amusements, operas, shows,

The business parts of a city, the trottoirs of a city when thousands of well-dressed people walk up and down,

The cotton, woollen, linen you wear, the money you make and spend,

Your room and bed-room, your piano-forte, the stove and cook-pans,

The house you live in, the rent, the other tenants, the deposit in the savings-bank, the trade at the grocery,

The pay on Seventh Day night, the going home, and the purchases;

In them the heft of the heaviest — in them far more than you estimated, and far less also,

In them realities for you and me — in them poems for you and me,

In them, not yourself — you and your Soul enclose all things, regardless of estimation,

In them themes, hints, provokers — if not, the whole earth has no themes, hints, provokers, and never had.

30. I do not affirm what you see beyond is futile — I do not advise you to stop,
I do not say leadings you thought great are not great,
But I say that none lead to greater, sadder, happier, than those lead to.

31. Will you seek afar off? You surely come back at last,
In things best known to you, finding the best, or as good as the best,
In folks nearest to you finding also the sweetest, strongest, lovingest,
Happiness, knowledge, not in another place, but this place — not for another hour, but this hour,
Man in the first you see or touch — always in your friend, brother, nighest neighbor — Woman in your mother, lover, wife,
The popular tastes and occupations taking precedence in poems or any where,
You workwomen and workmen of These States having your own divine and strong life,
Looking the President always sternly in the face, unbending, nonchalant,
Understanding that he is to be kept by you to short and sharp account of himself,
And all else thus far giving place to men and women like you.

32. O you robust, sacred!
I cannot tell you how I love you;

All I love America for, is contained in men and women like you.

33. When the psalm sings instead of the singer,
When the script preaches instead of the preacher,
When the pulpit descends and goes instead of the carver that carved the supporting-desk,
When I can touch the body of books, by night or by day, and when they touch my body back again,
When the holy vessels, or the bits of the eucharist, or the lath and plast, procreate as effectually as the young silver-smiths or bakers, or the masons in their over-alls,
When a university course convinces like a slumbering woman and child convince,
When the minted gold in the vault smiles like the night-watchman's daughter,
When warrantee deeds loafe in chairs opposite, and are my friendly companions,
I intend to reach them my hand, and make as much of them as I do of men and women like you.

CHANTS DEMOCRATIC.

America always!
Always me joined with you, whoever you are!
Always our own feuillage!
Always Florida's green peninsula! Always the priceless delta of Louisiana! Always the cotton-fields of Alabama and Texas!
Always California's golden hills and hollows — and the silver mountains of New Mexico! Always soft-breath'd Cuba!
Always the vast slope drained by the Southern Sea — inseparable with the slopes drained by the Eastern and Western Seas,
The area the Eighty-third year of These States — the three and a half millions of square miles,
The eighteen thousand miles of sea-coast and bay-coast on the main — the thirty thousand miles of river navigation,
The seven millions of distinct families, and the same number of dwellings — Always these and more, branching forth into numberless branches;
Always the free range and diversity! Always the continent of Democracy!
Always the prairies, pastures, forests, vast cities, travellers, Kanada, the snows;

Always these compact lands — lands tied at the hips with the belt stringing the huge oval lakes;
Always the West, with strong native persons — the increasing density there — the habitans, friendly, threatening, ironical, scorning invaders;
All sights, South, North, East — all deeds, promiscuously done at all times,
All characters, movements, growths — a few noticed, myriads unnoticed,
Through Mannahatta's streets I walking, these things gathering;
On interior rivers, by night, in the glare of pine knots, steamboats wooding up;
Sunlight by day on the valley of the Susquehanna, and on the valleys of the Potomac and Rappahannock, and the valleys of the Roanoke and Delaware;
In their northerly wilds beasts of prey haunting the Adirondacks, the hills — or lapping the Saginaw waters to drink;
In a lonesome inlet, a sheldrake, lost from the flock, sitting on the water, rocking silently;
In farmers' barns, oxen in the stable, their harvest labor done — they rest standing — they are too tired;
Afar on arctic ice, the she-walrus lying drowsily, while her cubs play around;
The hawk sailing where men have not yet sailed — the farthest polar sea, ripply, crystalline, open, beyond the floes;
White drift spooning ahead, where the ship in the tempest dashes;
On solid land, what is done in cities, as the bells all strike midnight together;

In primitive woods, the sounds there also sounding — the howl of the wolf, the scream of the panther, and the hoarse bellow of the elk;

In winter beneath the hard blue ice of Moosehead Lake — in summer visible through the clear waters, the great trout swimming;

In lower latitudes, in warmer air, in the Carolinas, the large black buzzard floating slowly high beyond the tree-tops,

Below, the red cedar, festooned with tylandria — the pines and cypresses, growing out of the white sand that spreads far and flat;

Rude boats descending the big Pedee — climbing plants, parasites, with colored flowers and berries, enveloping huge trees,

The waving drapery on the live oak, trailing long and low, noiselessly waved by the wind;

The camp of Georgia wagoners, just after dark — the supper-fires, and the cooking and eating by whites and negroes,

Thirty or forty great wagons — the mules, cattle, horses, feeding from troughs,

The shadows, gleams, up under the leaves of the old sycamore-trees — the flames — also the black smoke from the pitch-pine, curling and rising;

Southern fishermen fishing — the sounds and inlets of North Carolina's coast — the shad-fishery and the herring-fishery — the large sweep-seines — the windlasses on shore worked by horses — the clearing, curing, and packing houses;

Deep in the forest, in the piney woods, turpentine and tar dropping from the incisions in the trees — There is the turpentine distillery,

There are the negroes at work, in good health — the ground in all directions is covered with pine straw;

In Tennessee and Kentucky, slaves busy in the coalings, at the forge, by the furnace-blaze, or at the corn-shucking;

In Virginia, the planter's son returning after a long absence, joyfully welcomed and kissed by the aged mulatto nurse;

On rivers, boatmen safely moored at night-fall, in their boats, under the shelter of high banks,

Some of the younger men dance to the sound of the banjo or fiddle — others sit on the gunwale, smoking and talking;

Late in the afternoon, the mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing in the Great Dismal Swamp — there are the greenish waters, the resinous odor, the plenteous moss, the cypress tree, and the juniper tree;

Northward, young men of Mannahatta — the target company from an excursion returning home at evening — the musket-muzzles all bear bunches of flowers presented by women;

Children at play — or on his father's lap a young boy fallen asleep, (how his lips move! how he smiles in his sleep!)

The scout riding on horseback over the plains west of the Mississippi — he ascends a knoll and sweeps his eye around;

California life — the miner, bearded, dressed in his rude costume — the stanch California friendship — the sweet air — the graves one, in passing, meets, solitary, just aside the horse-path;

Down in Texas, the cotton-field, the negro-cabins — drivers driving mules or oxen before rude carts — cotton-bales piled on banks and wharves;

Encircling all, vast-darting, up and wide, the American Soul, with equal hemispheres — one Love, one Dilation or Pride;

In arriere, the peace-talk with the Iroquois, the aborigines — the calumet, the pipe of good-will arbitration, and indorsement,

The sachem blowing the smoke first toward the sun and then toward the earth,

The drama of the scalp-dance enacted with painted faces and guttural exclamations,

The setting out of the war-party — the long and stealthy march,

The single file — the swinging hatchets — the surprise and slaughter of enemies;

All the acts, scenes, ways, persons, attitudes of These States — reminiscences, all institutions,

All These States, compact — Every square mile of These States, without excepting a particle — you also — me also,

Me pleased, rambling in lanes and country fields, Paumanok's fields,

Me, observing the spiral flight of two little yellow butterflies, shuffling between each other, ascending high in the air;

The darting swallow, the destroyer of insects — the fall traveller southward, but returning northward early in the spring;

The country boy at the close of the day, driving the herd of cows, and shouting to them as they loiter to browse by the road-side;

The city wharf — Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore,
Charleston, New Orleans, San Francisco,
The departing ships, when the sailors heave at the
capstan;
Evening — me in my room — the setting sun,
The setting summer sun shining in my open window,
showing me flies, suspended, balancing in the
air in the centre of the room, darting athwart,
up and down, casting swift shadows in specks on
the opposite wall, where the shine is;
The athletic American matron speaking in public to
crowds of listeners;
Males, females, immigrants, combinations — the co-
piousness — the individuality and sovereignty
of The States, each for itself — the money-
makers;
Factories, machinery, the mechanical forces — the
windlass, lever, pulley — All certainties,
The certainty of space, increase, freedom, futurity,
In space, the sporades, the scattered islands, the stars
— on the firm earth, the lands, my lands,
O lands! all so dear to me — what you are, (what-
ever it is,) I become a part of that, whatever
it is,
Southward there, I screaming, with wings slow flap-
ping, with the myriads of gulls wintering along
the coasts of Florida — or in Louisiana, with
pelicans breeding,
Otherways, there, atwixt the banks of the Arkansaw,
the Rio Grande, the Nueces, the Brazos, the
Tombigbee, the Red River, the Saskatchawan, or
the Osage, I with the spring waters laughing and
skipping and running;

Northward, on the sands, on some shallow bay of Paumanok, I, with parties of snowy herons wading in the wet to seek worms and aquatic plants;

Retreating, triumphantly twittering, the king-bird, from piercing the crow with its bill, for amusement — And I triumphantly twittering;

The migrating flock of wild geese alighting in autumn to refresh themselves — the body of the flock feed — the sentinels outside move around with erect heads watching, and are from time to time relieved by other sentinels — And I feeding and taking turns with the rest;

In Kanadian forests, the moose, large as an ox, cornered by hunters, rising desperately on his hind-feet, and plunging with his fore-feet, the hoofs as sharp as knives — And I, plunging at the hunters, cornered and desperate;

In the Mannahatta, streets, piers, shipping, store-houses, and the countless workmen working in the shops,

And I too of the Mannahatta, singing thereof — and no less in myself than the whole of the Mannahatta in itself,

Singing the song of These, my ever united lands — my body no more inevitably united, part to part, and made one identity, any more than my lands are inevitably united, and made ONE IDENTITY,

Nativities, climates, the grass of the great Pastoral Plains,

Cities, labors, death, animals, products, good and evil — these me,

These affording, in all their particulars, endless feuillage to me and to America, how can I do less than pass the clew of the union of them, to afford the like to you?

Whoever you are! how can I but offer you divine leaves, that you also be eligible as I am?

How can I but, as here, chanting, invite you for yourself to collect bouquets of the incomparable feuillage of These States?

5.

RESPONDEZ! Respondez!

Let every one answer! Let those who sleep be waked! Let none evade — not you, any more than others!

(If it really be as is pretended, how much longer must we go on with our affectations and sneaking?

Let me bring this to a close — I pronounce openly for a new distribution of roles,)

Let that which stood in front go behind! and let that which was behind advance to the front and speak!

Let murderers, thieves, bigots, fools, unclean persons, offer new propositions!

Let the old propositions be postponed!

Let faces and theories be turned inside out! Let meanings be freely criminal, as well as results!

Let there be no suggestion above the suggestion of drudgery!

Let none be pointed toward his destination! (Say! do you know your destination?)

Let trillions of men and women be mocked with bodies and mocked with Souls!

Let the love that waits in them, wait! Let it die, or pass still-born to other spheres!

Let the sympathy that waits in every man, wait! or let it also pass, a dwarf, to other spheres!

Let contradictions prevail! Let one thing contradict another! and let one line of my poems contradict another!

Let the people sprawl with yearning aimless hands! Let their tongues be broken! Let their eyes be discouraged! Let none descend into their hearts with the fresh lusciousness of love!

Let the theory of America be management, caste, comparison! (Say! what other theory would you?)

Let them that distrust birth and death lead the rest! (Say! why shall they not lead you?)

Let the crust of hell be neared and trod on! Let the days be darker than the nights! Let slumber bring less slumber than waking-time brings!

Let the world never appear to him or her for whom it was all made!

Let the heart of the young man exile itself from the heart of the old man! and let the heart of the old man be exiled from that of the young man!

Let the sun and moon go! Let scenery take the applause of the audience! Let there be apathy under the stars!

Let freedom prove no man's inalienable right! Every one who can tyrannize, let him tyrannize to his satisfaction!

Let none but infidels be countenanced!

Let the eminence of meanness, treachery, sarcasm, hate, greed, indecency, impotence, lust, be taken for granted above all! Let writers, judges, governments, households, religions, philosophies, take such for granted above all!

Let the worst men beget children out of the worst women!

Let priests still play at immortality!

Let Death be inaugurated!

Let nothing remain upon the earth except the ashes of teachers, artists, moralists, lawyers, and learned and polite persons!

Let him who is without my poems be assassinated!

Let the cow, the horse, the camel, the garden-bee — Let the mud-fish, the lobster, the mussel, eel, the sting-ray, and the grunting pig-fish — Let these, and the like of these, be put on a perfect equality with man and woman!

Let churches accommodate serpents, vermin, and the corpses of those who have died of the most filthy of diseases!

Let marriage slip down among fools, and be for none but fools!

Let men among themselves talk and think obscenely of women! and let women among themselves talk and think obscenely of men!

Let every man doubt every woman! and let every woman trick every man!

Let us all, without missing one, be exposed in public, naked, monthly, at the peril of our lives! Let our bodies be freely handled and examined by whoever chooses!

Let nothing but copies, pictures, statues, reminiscences, elegant works, be permitted to exist upon the earth!

Let the earth desert God, nor let there ever henceforth be mentioned the name of God!

Let there be no God!

Let there be money, business, imports, exports, custom, authority, precedents, pallor, dyspepsia, smut, ignorance, unbelief!

Let judges and criminals be transposed! Let the prison-keepers be put in prison! Let those that were prisoners take the keys! (Say! why might they not just as well be transposed?)

Let the slaves be masters! Let the masters become slaves!

Let the reformers descend from the stands where they are forever bawling! Let an idiot or insane person appear on each of the stands!

Let the Asiatic, the African, the European, the American and the Australian, go armed against the murderous stealthiness of each other! Let them sleep armed! Let none believe in good-will!

Let there be no unfashionable wisdom! Let such be scorned and derided off from the earth!

Let a floating cloud in the sky — Let a wave of the sea — Let one glimpse of your eye-sight upon the landscape or grass — Let growing mint, spinach, onions, tomatoes — Let these be exhibited as shows at a great price for admission!

Let all the men of These States stand aside for a few smouchers! Let the few seize on what they choose! Let the rest gawk, giggle, starve, obey!

Let shadows be furnished with genitals! Let substances be deprived of their genitals!

Let there be wealthy and immense cities — but through any of them, not a single poet, saviour, knower, lover!

Let the infidels of These States laugh all faith away! If one man be found who has faith, let the rest set upon him! Let them affright faith! Let them destroy the power of breeding faith!

Let the she-harlots and the he-harlots be prudent! Let them dance on, while seeming lasts! (O seeming! seeming! seeming!)

Let the preachers recite creeds! Let them teach only what they have been taught!

Let the preachers of creeds never dare to go meditate candidly upon the hills, alone, by day or by night! (If one ever once dare, he is lost!)

Let insanity have charge of sanity!

Let books take the place of trees, animals, rivers, clouds!

Let the daubed portraits of heroes supersede heroes!

Let the manhood of man never take steps after itself! Let it take steps after eunuchs, and after consumptive and genteel persons!

Let the white person tread the black person under his heel! (Say! which is trodden under heel, after all?)

Let the reflections of the things of the world be studied in mirrors! Let the things themselves continue unstudied!

Let a man seek pleasure everywhere except in himself! Let a woman seek happiness everywhere except in herself! (Say! what real happiness have you had one single time through your whole life?)

Let the limited years of life do nothing for the limitless years of death! (Say! what do you suppose death will do, then?)

6.

1. YOU just maturing youth! You male or female!
Remember the organic compact of These States,
Remember the pledge of the Old Thirteen thenceforward to the rights, life, liberty, equality of man,
Remember what was promulged by the founders, ratified by The States, signed in black and white by the Commissioners, and read by Washington at the head of the army,
Remember the purposes of the founders,—Remember Washington;
Remember the copious humanity streaming from every direction toward America;
Remember the hospitality that belongs to nations and men; (Cursed be nation, woman, man, without hospitality!)
Remember, government is to subserve individuals,

Not any, not the President, is to have one jot more than you or me,
Not any habitan of America is to have one jot less than you or me.

2. Anticipate when the thirty or fifty millions, are to become the hundred, or two hundred millions, of equal freemen and freewomen, amicably joined.

3. Recall ages — One age is but a part — ages are but a part;
Recall the angers, bickerings, delusions, superstitions, of the idea of caste,
Recall the bloody cruelties and crimes.

4. Anticipate the best women;
I say an unnumbered new race of hardy and well-defined women are to spread through all These States,
I say a girl fit for These States must be free, capable, dauntless, just the same as a boy.

5 Anticipate your own life — retract with merciless power,
Shirk nothing — retract in time — Do you see those errors, diseases, weaknesses, lies, thefts?
Do you see that lost character? — Do you see decay, consumption, rum-drinking, dropsy, fever, mortal cancer or inflammation?
Do you see death, and the approach of death?

6. Think of the Soul;
I swear to you that body of yours gives proportions to your Soul somehow to live in other spheres,
I do not know how, but I know it is so.

7. Think of loving and being loved;
I swear to you, whoever you are, you can interfuse yourself with such things that everybody that sees you shall look longingly upon you.

8. Think of the past;
I warn you that in a little while, others will find their past in you and your times.

9. The race is never separated — nor man nor woman escapes,
All is inextricable — things, spirits, nature, nations, you too — from precedents you come.

10 Recall the ever-welcome defiers, (The mothers precede them;)
Recall the sages, poets, saviours, inventors, lawgivers, of the earth,
Recall Christ, brother of rejected persons — brother of slaves, felons, idiots, and of insane and diseased persons.

11. Think of the time when you was not yet born,
Think of times you stood at the side of the dying,
Think of the time when your own body will be dying.

12. Think of spiritual results,
Sure as the earth swims through the heavens, does every one of its objects pass into spiritual results.

13. Think of manhood, and you to be a man;
Do you count manhood, and the sweet of manhood, nothing?

14. Think of womanhood, and you to be a woman;
The creation is womanhood,
Have I not said that womanhood involves all?
Have I not told how the universe has nothing better than the best womanhood?

7.

1. WITH antecedents,
With my fathers and mothers, and the accumulations of past ages,
With all which, had it not been, I would not now be here, as I am,
With Egypt, India, Phenicia, Greece, and Rome,
With the Celt, the Scandinavian, the Alb, and the Saxon,
With antique maritime ventures — with laws, artisanship, wars, and journeys,
With the poet, the skald, the saga, the myth, and the oracle,
With the sale of slaves — with enthusiasts — with the troubadour, the crusader, and the monk,
With those old continents whence we have come to this new continent,
With the fading kingdoms and kings over there,
With the fading religions and priests,
With the small shores we look back to, from our own large and present shores,

With countless years drawing themselves onward, and arrived at these years,
You and Me arrived — America arrived, and making this year,
This year! sending itself ahead countless years to come.

2. O but it is not the years — it is I — it is You,
We touch all laws, and tally all antecedents,
We are the skald, the oracle, the monk, and the knight — we easily include them, and more,
We stand amid time, beginningless and endless — we stand amid evil and good,
All swings around us — there is as much darkness as light,
The very sun swings itself and its system of planets around us,
Its sun, and its again, all swing around us.

3. As for me,
I have the idea of all, and am all, and believe in all;
I believe materialism is true, and spiritualism is true — I reject no part.

4. Have I forgotten any part?
Come to me, whoever and whatever, till I give you recognition.

5. I respect Assyria, China, Teutonia, and the Hebrews,
I adopt each theory, myth, god, and demi-god,
I see that the old accounts, bibles, genealogies, are true, without exception,
I assert that all past days were what they should have been,

And that they could no-how have been better than they were,
And that to-day is what it should be — and that America is,
And that to-day and America could no-how be better than they are.

6. In the name of These States, and in your and my name, the Past,
And in the name of These States, and in your and my name, the Present time.

7. I know that the past was great, and the future will be great,
And I know that both curiously conjoint in the present time,
(For the sake of him I typify — for the common average man's sake — your sake, if you are he;)
And that where I am, or you are, this present day, there is the centre of all days, all races,
And there is the meaning, to us, of all that has ever come of races and days, or ever will come.

8.

1. SPLENDOR of falling day, floating and filling me,
Hour prophetic — hour resuming the past,
Inflating my throat — you, divine average!
You, Earth and Life, till the last ray gleams, I sing.

2. Open mouth of my Soul, uttering gladness,
Eyes of my Soul, seeing perfection,
Natural life of me, faithfully praising things,
Corroborating forever the triumph of things.

3. Illustrious every one!
Illustrious what we name space — sphere of unnumbered spirits,
Illustrious the mystery of motion, in all beings, even the tiniest insect,
Illustrious the attribute of speech — the senses — the body,
Illustrious the passing light! Illustrious the pale reflection on the moon in the western sky!
Illustrious whatever I see, or hear, or touch, to the last.

4. Good in all,
In the satisfaction and aplomb of animals,
In the annual return of the seasons,
In the hilarity of youth,
In the strength and flush of manhood,
In the grandeur and exquisiteness of old age,
In the superb vistas of Death.

5. Wonderful to depart!
Wonderful to be here!
The heart, to jet the all-alike and innocent blood,
To breathe the air, how delicious!
To speak! to walk! to seize something by the hand!
To prepare for sleep, for bed — to look on my rose-colored flesh,
To be conscious of my body, so amorous, so large,

To be this incredible God I am,
To have gone forth among other Gods — those men and women I love.

6. Wonderful how I celebrate you and myself!
How my thoughts play subtly at the spectacles around!
How the clouds pass silently overhead!
How the earth darts on and on! and how the sun, moon, stars, dart on and on!
How the water sports and sings! (Surely it is alive!)
How the trees rise and stand up — with strong trunks — with branches and leaves!
(Surely there is something more in each of the trees — some living Soul.)

7. O amazement of things! even the least particle!
O spirituality of things!
O strain musical, flowing through ages and continents — now reaching me and America!
I take your strong chords — I intersperse them, and cheerfully pass them forward.

8. I too carol the sun, ushered, or at noon, or setting,
I too throb to the brain and beauty of the earth, and of all the growths of the earth,
I too have felt the resistless call of myself.

9. As I sailed down the Mississippi,
As I wandered over the prairies,
As I have lived — As I have looked through my windows, my eyes,

As I went forth in the morning — As I beheld the light breaking in the east,
As I bathed on the beach of the Eastern Sea, and again on the beach on the Western Sea,
As I roamed the streets of inland Chicago — whatever streets I have roamed,
Wherever I have been, I have charged myself with contentment and triumph.

10. I sing the Equalities,
I sing the endless finales of things,
I say Nature continues — Glory continues,
I praise with electric voice,
For I do not see one imperfection in the universe,
And I do not see one cause or result lamentable at last in the universe.

11. O setting sun! O when the time comes,
I still warble under you, if none else does, unmitigated adoration!

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

9.

A THOUGHT of what I am here for,
Of these years I sing — how they pass through convulsed pains, as through parturitions;
How America illustrates birth, gigantic youth, the promise, the sure fulfilment, despite of people — Illustrates evil as well as good;

Of how many hold despairingly yet to the models departed, caste, myths, obedience, compulsion, and to infidelity;

How few see the arrived models, the Athletes, The States — or see freedom or spirituality — or hold any faith in results,

(But I see the Athletes — and I see the results glorious and inevitable — and they again leading to other results;)

How the great cities appear — How the Democratic masses, turbulent, wilful, as I love them,

How the whirl, the contest, the wrestle of evil with good, the sounding and resounding, keep on and on;

How society waits unformed, and is between things ended and things begun;

How America is the continent of glories, and of the triumph of freedom, and of the Democracies, and of the fruits of society, and of all that is begun;

And how The States are complete in themselves — And how all triumphs and glories are complete in themselves, to lead onward,

And how these of mine, and of The States, will in their turn be convulsed, and serve other parturitions and transitions,

And how all people, sights, combinations, the Democratic masses too, serve — and how every fact serves,

And how now, or at any time, each serves the exquisite transition of Death.

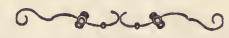
10.

HISTORIAN! you who celebrate bygones!
You have explored the outward, the surface of the races — the life that has exhibited itself,
You have treated man as the creature of politics, aggregates, rulers, and priests;
But now I also, arriving, contribute something:
I, an habitué of the Alleghanies, treat man as he is in the influences of Nature, in himself, in his own inalienable rights,
Advancing, to give the spirit and the traits of new Democratic ages, myself, personally,
(Let the future behold them all in me — Me, so puzzling and contradictory — Me, a Manhattanese, the most loving and arrogant of men;)
I do not tell the usual facts, proved by records and documents,
What I tell, (talking to every born American,) requires no further proof than he or she who will hear me, will furnish, by silently meditating alone;
I press the pulse of the life that has hitherto seldom exhibited itself, but has generally sought concealment, (the great pride of man, in himself,)
I illuminate feelings, faults, yearnings, hopes — I have come at last, no more ashamed nor afraid;
Chanter of Personality, outlining a history yet to be,
I project the ideal man, the American of the future.

11.

THE thought of fruitage,
Of Death, (the life greater) — of seeds dropping into the ground — of birth,
Of the steady concentration of America, inland, upward, to impregnable and swarming places,
Of what Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and the rest, are to be,
Of what a few years will show there in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the rest,
Of what the feuillage of America is the preparation for — and of what all the sights, North, South, East and West, are;
Of the temporary use of materials for identity's sake,
Of departing — of the growth of a mightier race than any yet,
Of myself, soon, perhaps, closing up my songs by these shores,
Of California — of Oregon — and of me journeying hence to live and sing there;
Of the Western Sea — of the spread inland between it and the spinal river,
Of the great pastoral area, athletic and feminine,
Of all sloping down there where the fresh free-giver, the mother, the Mississippi flows — and Westward still;

Of future men and women there — of happiness in those high plateaus, ranging three thousand miles, warm and cold,
Of cities yet unsurveyed and unsuspected, (as I am also, and as it must be,)
Of the new and good names — of the strong developments — of the inalienable homesteads,
Of a free original life there — of simple diet, and clean and sweet blood,
Of litheness, majestic faces, clear eyes, and perfect physique there,
Of immense spiritual results, future years, inland, spread there each side of the Anahuacs,
Of these Leaves well-understood there, (being made for that area,)
Of the native scorn of grossness and gain there,
(O it lurks in me night and day — What is gain, after all, to savageness and freedom?)



12.

1. To oratists — to male or female,
Vocalism, breath, measure, concentration, determination, and the divine power to use words.

2. Are you eligible?
Are you full-lung'd and limber-lipp'd from long trial? from vigorous practice? from physique?

Do you move in these broad lands as broad as they?
Remembering inland America, the high plateaus, stretching long?
Remembering Kanada — Remembering what edges the vast round edge of the Mexican Sea?
Come duly to the divine power to use words?

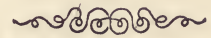
3. For only at last, after many years — after chastity, friendship, procreation, prudence, and nakedness,
After treading ground and breasting river and lake,
After a loosened throat — after absorbing eras, temperaments, races — after knowledge, freedom, crimes,
After complete faith — after clarifyings, elevations, and removing obstructions,
After these, and more, it is just possible there comes to a man, a woman, the divine power to use words.

4. Then toward that man or that woman swiftly hasten all — None refuse, all attend,
Armies, ships, antiquities, the dead, libraries, paintings, machines, cities, hate, despair, amity, pain, theft, murder, aspiration, form in close ranks,
They debouch as they are wanted to march obediently through the mouth of that man, or that woman.

5. O now I see arise orators fit for inland America,
And I see it is as slow to become an orator as to become a man,
And I see that power is folded in a great vocalism.

6. Of a great vocalism, when you hear it, the merciless light shall pour, and the storm rage around,

Every flash shall be a revelation, an insult,
The glaring flame turned on depths, on heights, on suns, on stars,
On the interior and exterior of man or woman,
On the laws of Nature — on passive materials,
On what you called death — and what to you therefore was death,
As far as there can be death.



13.

1. LAWS for Creations,
For strong artists and leaders — for fresh broods of teachers, and perfect literats for America,
For diverse savans, and coming musicians.

2. There shall be no subject but it shall be treated with reference to the ensemble of the world, and the compact truth of the world — And no coward or copyist shall be allowed;
There shall be no subject too pronounced — All works shall illustrate the divine law of indirections;
There they stand — I see them already, each poised and in its place,
Statements, models, censuses, poems, dictionaries, biographies, essays, theories — How complete! How relative and interfused! No one supersedes another;
They do not seem to me like the old specimens,

They seem to me like Nature at last, (America has given birth to them, and I have also;)
They seem to me at last as perfect as the animals, and as the rocks and weeds — fitted to them,
Fitted to the sky, to float with floating clouds — to rustle among the trees with rustling leaves,
To stretch with stretched and level waters, where ships silently sail in the distance.

3. What do you suppose Creation is?
What do you suppose will satisfy the Soul, except to walk free and own no superior?
What do you suppose I have intimated to you in a hundred ways, but that man or woman is as good as God?
And that there is no God any more divine than Yourself?
And that that is what the oldest and newest myths finally mean?
And that you or any one must approach Creations through such laws?

14.

1. POETS to come!
Not to-day is to justify me, and Democracy, and what we are for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known,
You must justify me.

2. Indeed, if it were not for you, what would I be?
What is the little I have done, except to arouse you?

3. I depend on being realized, long hence, where the broad fat prairies spread, and thence to Oregon and California inclusive,
I expect that the Texan and the Arizonian, ages hence, will understand me,
I expect that the future Carolinian and Georgian will understand me and love me,
I expect that Kanadians, a hundred, and perhaps many hundred years from now, in winter, in the splendor of the snow and woods, or on the icy lakes, will take me with them, and permanently enjoy themselves with me.

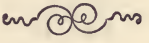
4. Of to-day I know I am momentary, untouched — I am the bard of the future,
I but write one or two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment, only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness.

5. I am a man who, sauntering along, without fully stopping, turns a casual look upon you, and then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you.

15.

WHO has gone farthest? For I swear I will go farther;
And who has been just? For I would be the most just person of the earth;
And who most cautious? For I would be more cautious;
And who has been happiest? O I think it is I! I think no one was ever happier than I;
And who has lavished all? For I lavish constantly the best I have;
And who has been firmest? For I would be firmer;
And who proudest? For I think I have reason to be the proudest son alive — for I am the son of the brawny and tall-topt city;
And who has been bold and true? For I would be the boldest and truest being of the universe;
And who benevolent? For I would show more benevolence than all the rest;
And who has projected beautiful words through the longest time? By God! I will outvie him! I will say such words, they shall stretch through longer time!
And who has received the love of the most friends? For I know what it is to receive the passionate love of many friends;
And to whom has been given the sweetest from women, and paid them in kind? For I will take the like sweets and pay them in kind;

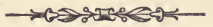
And who possesses a perfect and enamoured body?
For I do not believe any one possesses a more perfect or enamoured body than mine;
And who thinks the amplest thoughts? For I will surround those thoughts;
And who has made hymns fit for the earth? For I am mad with devouring extacy to make joyous hymns for the whole earth!



16.

THEY shall arise in the States — mediums shall,
They shall report Nature, laws, physiology, and happiness,
They shall illustrate Democracy and the kosmos,
They shall be alimentive, amative, perceptive,
They shall be complete women and men — their pose brawny and supple, their drink water, their blood clean and clear,
They shall enjoy materialism and the sight of products — they shall enjoy the sight of the beef, lumber, bread-stuffs, of Chicago, the great city,
They shall train themselves to go in public to become oratists, (orators and oratresses,)
Strong and sweet shall their tongues be — poems and materials of poems shall come from their lives — they shall be makers and finders,
Of them, and of their works, shall emerge divine conveyers, to convey gospels,

Characters, events, retrospections, shall be conveyed in gospels — Trees, animals, waters, shall be conveyed,
Death, the future, the invisible faith, shall all be conveyed.



17.

1. Now we start hence, I with the rest, on our journeys through The States,
We willing learners of all, teachers of all, and lovers of all.

2. I have watched the seasons dispensing themselves, and passing on,
And I have said, Why should not a man or woman do as much as the seasons, and effuse as much?

3. We dwell a while in every city and town,
We pass through Kanada, the north-east, the vast valley of the Mississippi, and the Southern States,
We confer on equal terms with each of The States,
We make trial of ourselves, and invite men and women to hear,
We say to ourselves, Remember, fear not, be candid, promulge the body and the Soul,
Promulge real things — Never forget the equality of humankind, and never forget immortality;

Dwell a while, and pass on — Be copious, temperate, chaste, magnetic,
And what you effuse may then return as the seasons return,
And may be just as much as the seasons.

18.

ME imperturbe,
Me standing at ease in Nature,
Master of all, or mistress of all — aplomb in the midst of irrational things,
Imbued as they — passive, receptive, silent as they,
Finding my occupation, poverty, notoriety, foibles, crimes, less important than I thought;
Me private, or public, or menial, or solitary — all these subordinate, (I am eternally equal with the best — I am not subordinate;)
Me toward the Mexican Sea, or in the Mannahatta, or the Tennessee, or far north, or inland,
A river-man, or a man of the woods, or of any farm-life of These States, or of the coast, or the lakes, or Kanada,
Me, wherever my life is to be lived, O to be self-balanced for contingencies!
O to confront night, storms, hunger, ridicule, accidents, rebuffs, as the trees and animals do.

19.

I WAS looking a long while for the history of the past for myself, and for these Chants — and now I have found it,
It is not in those paged fables in the libraries, (them I neither accept nor reject,)
It is no more in the legends than in all else,
It is in the present — it is this earth to-day,
It is in Democracy — in this America — the old world also,
It is the life of one man or one woman to-day, the average man of to-day;
It is languages, social customs, literatures, arts,
It is the broad show of artificial things, ships, machinery, politics, creeds, modern improvements, and the interchanges of nations,
All for the average man of to-day.

20.

1. AMERICAN mouth-songs!
Those of mechanics — each one singing his, as it should be, blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his, as he measures his plank or beam,

The mason singing his, as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat — the deck-hand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench — the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song — the ploughboy's, on his way in the morning, or at the noon intermission, or at sundown;
The delicious singing of the mother — or of the young wife at work — or of the girl sewing or washing — Each singing what belongs to her, and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day — At night, the party of young fellows, robust, friendly, clean-blooded, singing with melodious voices, melodious thoughts.

2. Come! some of you! still be flooding The States with hundreds and thousands of mouth-songs, fit for The States only.

24.

1. As I walk, solitary, unattended,
Around me I hear that eclat of the world — politics, produce,
The announcements of recognized things — science,
The approved growth of cities, and the spread of inventions.

2. I see the ships, (they will last a few years,)
The vast factories with their foremen and workmen,
And hear the indorsement of all, and do not object to it.

3. But we too announce solid things,
Science, ships, politics, cities, factories, are not nothing — they serve,
They stand for realities — all is as it should be.

4. Then my realities,
What else is so real as mine?
Libertad, and the divine average — Freedom to every slave on the face of the earth,
The rapt promises and lumine of seers — the spiritual world — these centuries-lasting songs,
And our visions, the visions of poets, the most solid announcements of any.

5. For we support all,
After the rest is done and gone, we remain,
There is no final reliance but upon us,
Democracy rests finally upon us, (I, my brethren, begin it,)
And our visions sweep through eternity.

Leaves of Grass.

1.

1. Elemental drifts!
O I wish I could impress others as you and the waves have just been impressing me.

2. As I ebbed with an ebb of the ocean of life,
As I wended the shores I know,
As I walked where the sea-ripples wash you, Paumanok,
Where they rustle up, hoarse and sibilant,
Where the fierce old mother endlessly cries for her castaways,
I, musing, late in the autumn day, gazing off southward,
Alone, held by the eternal self of me that threatens to get the better of me, and stifle me,
Was seized by the spirit that trails in the lines underfoot,
In the rim, the sediment, that stands for all the water and all the land of the globe.

3. Fascinated, my eyes, reverting from the south,
dropped, to follow those slender winrows,
Chaff, straw, splinters of wood, weeds, and the sea-gluten,
Scum, scales from shining rocks, leaves of salt-lettuce, left by the tide;
Miles walking, the sound of breaking waves the other side of me,
Paumanok, there and then, as I thought the old thought of likenesses,
These you presented to me, you fish-shaped island,
As I wended the shores I know,
As I walked with that eternal self of me, seeking types.

4. As I wend the shores I know not,
As I listen to the dirge, the voices of men and women wrecked,
As I inhale the impalpable breezes that set in upon me,
As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer and closer,
At once I find, the least thing that belongs to me, or that I see or touch, I know not;
I, too, but signify, at the utmost, a little washed-up drift,
A few sands and dead leaves to gather,
Gather, and merge myself as part of the sands and drift.

5. O baffled, balked,
Bent to the very earth, here preceding what follows,
Oppressed with myself that I have dared to open my mouth,

Aware now, that, amid all the blab whose echoes
recoil upon me, I have not once had the least
idea who or what I am,
But that before all my insolent poems the real ME
still stands untouched, untold, altogether un-
reached,
Withdrawn far, mocking me with mock-congrat-
ulatory signs and bows,
With peals of distant ironical laughter at every word
I have written or shall write,
Striking me with insults till I fall helpless upon the
sand.

6. O I perceive I have not understood anything — not a
single object — and that no man ever can.

7. I perceive Nature here, in sight of the sea, is taking
advantage of me, to dart upon me, and sting me,
Because I was assuming so much,
And because I have dared to open my mouth to sing
at all.

8. You oceans both! You tangible land! Nature!
Be not too rough with me — I submit — I close with
you,
These little shreds shall, indeed, stand for all.

9. You friable shore, with trails of debris!
You fish-shaped island! I take what is underfoot;
What is yours is mine, my father.

10. I too Paumanok,
I too have bubbled up, floated the measureless float,
and been washed on your shores;

I too am but a trail of drift and debris,
I too leave little wrecks upon you, you fish-shaped island.

11. I throw myself upon your breast, my father,
I cling to you so that you cannot unloose me,
I hold you so firm, till you answer me something.

12. Kiss me, my father,
Touch me with your lips, as I touch those I love,
Breathe to me, while I hold you close, the secret of the wondrous murmuring I envy,
For I fear I shall become crazed, if I cannot emulate it, and utter myself as well as it.

13. Sea-raff! Crook-tongued waves!
O, I will yet sing, some day, what you have said to me.

14. Ebb, ocean of life, (the flow will return,)
Cease not your moaning, you fierce old mother,
Endlessly cry for your castaways — but fear not, deny not me,
Rustle not up so hoarse and angry against my feet, as I touch you, or gather from you.

15. I mean tenderly by you,
I gather for myself, and for this phantom, looking down where we lead, and following me and mine.

16. Me and mine!
We, loose winrows, little corpses,
Froth, snowy white, and bubbles,

(See! from my dead lips the ooze exuding at last!
See — the prismatic colors, glistening and rolling!)
Tufts of straw, sands, fragments,
Buoyed hither from many moods, one contradicting another,
From the storm, the long calm, the darkness, the swell,
Musing, pondering, a breath, a briny tear, a dab of liquid or soil,
Up just as much out of fathomless workings fermented and thrown,
A limp blossom or two, torn, just as much over waves floating, drifted at random,
Just as much for us that sobbing dirge of Nature,
Just as much, whence we come, that blare of the cloud-trumpets;
We, capricious, brought hither, we know not whence, spread out before You, up there, walking or sitting,
Whoever you are — we too lie in drifts at your feet.

2.

1. GREAT are the myths — I too delight in them,
Great are Adam and Eve — I too look back and accept them,
Great the risen and fallen nations, and their poets, women, sages, inventors, rulers, warriors, and priests.

2. Great is Liberty! great is Equality! I am their follower,
Helmsmen of nations, choose your craft! where you sail, I sail,
Yours is the muscle of life or death — yours is the perfect science — in you I have absolute faith.

3. Great is To-day, and beautiful,
It is good to live in this age — there never was any better.

4. Great are the plunges, throes, triumphs, downfalls of Democracy,
Great the reformers, with their lapses and screams,
Great the daring and venture of sailors, on new explorations.

5. Great are Yourself and Myself,
We are just as good and bad as the oldest and youngest or any,
What the best and worst did, we could do,
What they felt, do not we feel it in ourselves?
What they wished, do we not wish the same?

6. Great is Youth — equally great is Old Age — great are the Day and Night,
Great is Wealth — great is Poverty — great is Expression — great is Silence.

7. Youth, large, lusty, loving — Youth, full of grace, force, fascination,
Do you know that Old Age may come after you, with equal grace, force, fascination?

8. Day, full-blown and splendid — Day of the immense sun, action, ambition, laughter,
The Night follows close, with millions of suns, and sleep, and restoring darkness.

9. Wealth with the flush hand, fine clothes, hospitality,
But then the Soul's wealth, which is candor, knowledge, pride, enfolding love;
(Who goes for men and women showing Poverty richer than wealth?)

10. Expression of speech! in what is written or said, forget not that Silence is also expressive,
That anguish as hot as the hottest, and contempt as cold as the coldest, may be without words,
That the true adoration is likewise without words, and without kneeling.

11. Great is the greatest Nation — the nation of clusters of equal nations.

12. Great is the Earth, and the way it became what it is;
Do you imagine it is stopped at this? the increase abandoned?
Understand then that it goes as far onward from this, as this is from the times when it lay in covering waters and gases, before man had appeared.

13. Great is the quality of Truth in man,
The quality of truth in man supports itself through all changes,

It is inevitably in the man — he and it are in love, and never leave each other.

14. The truth in man is no dictum, it is vital as eyesight,
If there be any Soul, there is truth — if there be man or woman, there is truth — if there be physical or moral, there is truth,
If there be equilibrium or volition, there is truth — if there be things at all upon the earth, there is truth.

15. O truth of the earth! O truth of things! I am determined to press my way toward you,
Sound your voice! I scale mountains, or dive in the sea after you.

16. Great is Language — it is the mightiest of the sciences,
It is the fulness, color, form, diversity of the earth, and of men and women, and of all qualities and processes,
It is greater than wealth — it is greater than buildings, ships, religions, paintings, music.

17. Great is the English speech — what speech is so great as the English?
Great is the English brood — what brood has so vast a destiny as the English?
It is the mother of the brood that must rule the earth with the new rule,
The new rule shall rule as the Soul rules, and as the love, justice, equality in the Soul, rule.

18 Great is Law — great are the old few landmarks of the law,
They are the same in all times, and shall not be disturbed.

19. Great are commerce, newspapers, books, free-trade, railroads, steamers, international mails, telegraphs, exchanges.

20 Great is Justice!
Justice is not settled by legislators and laws — it is in the Soul,
It cannot be varied by statutes, any more than love, pride, the attraction of gravity, can,
It is immutable — it does not depend on majorities — majorities or what not come at last before the same passionless and exact tribunal.

21. For justice are the grand natural lawyers and perfect judges — it is in their Souls,
It is well assorted — they have not studied for nothing — the great includes the less,
They rule on the highest grounds — they oversee all eras, states, administrations.

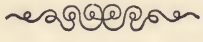
22. The perfect judge fears nothing — he could go front to front before God,
Before the perfect judge all shall stand back — life and death shall stand back — heaven and hell shall stand back.

23. Great is Goodness!
I do not know what it is, any more than I know what health is — but I know it is great.

24. Great is Wickedness — I find I often admire it, just as much as I admire goodness,
Do you call that a paradox? It certainly is a paradox.

25. The eternal equilibrium of things is great, and the eternal overthrow of things is great,
And there is another paradox.

26. Great is Life, real and mystical, wherever and whoever,
Great is Death — sure as Life holds all parts together, Death holds all parts together,
Death has just as much purport as Life has,
Do you enjoy what Life confers? you shall enjoy what Death confers,
I do not understand the realities of Death, but I know they are great,
I do not understand the least reality of Life — how then can I understand the realities of Death?



3.

1. A YOUNG man came to me with a message from his brother,
How should the young man know the whether and when of his brother?
Tell him to send me the signs.

2. And I stood before the young man face to face, and took his right hand in my left hand, and his left hand in my right hand,

And I answered for his brother, and for men, and I answered for THE POET, and sent these signs.

3. Him all wait for — him all yield up to — his word is decisive and final,
Him they accept, in him lave, in him perceive themselves, as amid light,
Him they immerse, and he immerses them.

4. Beautiful women, the haughtiest nations, laws, the landscape, people, animals,
The profound earth and its attributes, and the unquiet ocean,
All enjoyments and properties, and money, and whatever money will buy,
The best farms — others toiling and planting, and he unavoidably reaps,
The noblest and costliest cities — others grading and building, and he domiciles there,
Nothing for any one, but what is for him — near and far are for him,
The ships in the offing — the perpetual shows and marches on land, are for him, if they are for any body.

5. He puts things in their attitudes,
He puts to-day out of himself, with plasticity and love,
He places his own city, times, reminiscences, parents, brothers and sisters, associations, employment, politics, so that the rest never shame them afterward, nor assume to command them.

6. He is the answerer,
What can be answered he answers — and what cannot be answered, he shows how it cannot be answered.

7. A man is a summons and challenge;
(It is vain to skulk — Do you hear that mocking and laughter? Do you hear the ironical echoes?)

8. Books, friendships, philosophers, priests, action, pleasure, pride, beat up and down, seeking to give satisfaction,
He indicates the satisfaction, and indicates them that beat up and down also.

9. Whichever the sex, whatever the season or place, he may go freshly and gently and safely, by day or by night,
He has the pass-key of hearts — to him the response of the prying of hands on the knobs.

10. His welcome is universal — the flow of beauty is not more welcome or universal than he is,
The person he favors by day or sleeps with at night is blessed.

11. Every existence has its idiom — everything has an idiom and tongue,
He resolves all tongues into his own, and bestows it upon men, and any man translates, and any man translates himself also,
One part does not counteract another part — he is the joiner — he sees how they join.

12. He says indifferently and alike, *How are you, friend?* to the President at his levee,

And he says, *Good-day, my brother!* to Cudge that hoes in the sugar-field,
And both understand him, and know that his speech is right.

13. He walks with perfect ease in the capitol,
He walks among the Congress, and one representative says to another, *Here is our equal, appearing and new.*

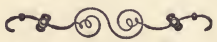
14. Then the mechanics take him for a mechanic,
And the soldiers suppose him to be a captain, and the sailors that he has followed the sea,
And the authors take him for an author, and the artists for an artist,
And the laborers perceive he could labor with them and love them,
No matter what the work is, that he is the one to follow it, or has followed it,
No matter what the nation, that he might find his brothers and sisters there.

15. The English believe he comes of their English stock,
A Jew to the Jew he seems — a Russ to the Russ — usual and near, removed from none.

16. Whoever he looks at in the traveller's coffee-house claims him,
The Italian or Frenchman is sure, and the German is sure, and the Spaniard is sure, and the island Cuban is sure;
The engineer, the deck-hand on the great lakes, or on the Mississippi, or St. Lawrence, or Sacramento, or Hudson, or Paumanok Sound, claims him.

17. The gentleman of perfect blood acknowledges his perfect blood,
The insulter, the prostitute, the angry person, the beggar, see themselves in the ways of him — he strangely transmutes them,
They are not vile any more — they hardly know themselves, they are so grown.

18. Do you think it would be good to be the writer of melodious verses?
Well, it would be good to be the writer of melodious verses;
But what are verses beyond the flowing character you could have? or beyond beautiful manners and behavior?
Or beyond one manly or affectionate deed of an apprentice-boy? or old woman? or man that has been in prison, or is likely to be in prison?



4.

1. SOMETHING startles me where I thought I was safest,
I withdraw from the still woods I loved,
I will not go now on the pastures to walk,
I will not strip the clothes from my body to meet my lover the sea,
I will not touch my flesh to the earth, as to other flesh, to renew me.

2. O Earth!
O how can the ground of you not sicken?
How can you be alive, you growths of spring?
How can you furnish health, you blood of herbs, roots, orchards, grain?
Are they not continually putting distempered corpses in you?
Is not every continent worked over and over with sour dead?

3. Where have you disposed of those carcasses of the drunkards and gluttons of so many generations?
Where have you drawn off all the foul liquid and meat?
I do not see any of it upon you to-day — or perhaps I am deceived,
I will run a furrow with my plough — I will press my spade through the sod, and turn it up underneath,
I am sure I shall expose some of the foul meat.

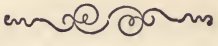
4. Behold!
This is the compost of billions of premature corpses,
Perhaps every mite has once formed part of a sick person — Yet behold!
The grass covers the prairies,
The bean bursts noiselessly through the mould in the garden,
The delicate spear of the onion pierces upward,
The apple-buds cluster together on the apple-branches,
The resurrection of the wheat appears with pale visage out of its graves,
The tinge awakes over the willow-tree and the mulberry-tree,

The he-birds carol mornings and evenings, while the she-birds sit on their nests,
The young of poultry break through the hatched eggs,
The new-born of animals appear — the calf is dropt from the cow, the colt from the mare,
Out of its little hill faithfully rise the potato's dark green leaves,
Out of its hill rises the yellow maize-stalk;
The summer growth is innocent and disdainful above all those strata of sour dead.

5. What chemistry!
That the winds are really not infectious,
That this is no cheat, this transparent green-wash of the sea, which is so amorous after me,
That it is safe to allow it to lick my naked body all over with its tongues,
That it will not endanger me with the fevers that have deposited themselves in it,
That all is clean, forever and forever,
That the cool drink from the well tastes so good,
That blackberries are so flavorous and juicy,
That the fruits of the apple-orchard, and of the orange-orchard — that melons, grapes, peaches, plums, will none of them poison me,
That when I recline on the grass I do not catch any disease,
Though probably every spear of grass rises out of what was once a catching disease.

6. Now I am terrified at the Earth! it is that calm and patient,
It grows such sweet things out of such corruptions,

It turns harmless and stainless on its axis, with such endless successions of diseased corpses,
It distils such exquisite winds out of such infused fetor,
It renews, with such unwitting looks, its prodigal, annual, sumptuous crops,
It gives such divine materials to men, and accepts such leavings from them at last.



5.

1. ALL day I have walked the city, and talked with my friends, and thought of prudence,
Of time, space, reality — of such as these, and abreast with them, prudence.

2. After all, the last explanation remains to be made about prudence,
Little and large alike drop quietly aside from the prudence that suits immortality.

3. The Soul is of itself,
All verges to it — all has reference to what ensues,
All that a person does, says, thinks, is of consequence,
Not a move can a man or woman make, that affects him or her in a day, month, any part of the direct life-time, or the hour of death, but the same affects him or her onward afterward through the indirect life-time.

4. The indirect is more than the direct,
The spirit receives from the body just as much as it gives to the body, if not more.

5. Not one word or deed — not venereal sore, discoloration, privacy of the onanist, putridity of gluttons or rum-drinkers, peculation, cunning, betrayal, murder, seduction, prostitution, but has results beyond death, as really as before death.

6. Charity and personal force are the only investments worth anything.

7. No specification is necessary — all that a male or female does, that is vigorous, benevolent, clean, is so much profit to him or her, in the unshakable order of the universe, and through the whole scope of it forever.

8. Who has been wise, receives interest,
Savage, felon, President, judge, farmer, sailor, mechanic, young, old, it is the same,
The interest will come round — all will come round.

9. Singly, wholly, to affect now, affected their time, will forever affect, all of the past, and all of the present, and all of the future,
All the brave actions of war and peace,
All help given to relatives, strangers, the poor, old, sorrowful, young children, widows, the sick, and to shunned persons,
All furtherance of fugitives, and of the escape of slaves,

All self-denial that stood steady and aloof on wrecks, and saw others fill the seats of the boats,
All offering of substance or life for the good old cause, or for a friend's sake, or opinion's sake,
All pains of enthusiasts, scoffed at by their neighbors,
All the limitless sweet love and precious suffering of mothers,
All honest men baffled in strifes recorded or unrecorded,
All the grandeur and good of ancient nations whose fragments we inherit,
All the good of the hundreds of ancient nations unknown to us by name, date, location,
All that was ever manfully begun, whether it succeeded or no,
All suggestions of the divine mind of man, or the divinity of his mouth, or the shaping of his great hands;
All that is well thought or said this day on any part of the globe — or on any of the wandering stars, or on any of the fixed stars, by those there as we are here,
All that is henceforth to be thought or done by you, whoever you are, or by any one,
These inure, have inured, shall inure, to the identities from which they sprang, or shall spring.

10. Did you guess anything lived only its moment?
The world does not so exist — no parts palpable or impalpable so exist,
No consummation exists without being from some long previous consummation — and that from some other,

Without the farthest conceivable one coming a bit nearer the beginning than any.

11. Whatever satisfies Souls is true,
Prudence entirely satisfies the craving and glut of Souls,
Itself finally satisfies the Soul,
The Soul has that measureless pride which revolts from every lesson but its own.

12. Now I give you an inkling,
Now I breathe the word of the prudence that walks abreast with time, space, reality,
That answers the pride which refuses every lesson but its own.

13. What is prudence, is indivisible,
Declines to separate one part of life from every part,
Divides not the righteous from the unrighteous, or the living from the dead,
Matches every thought or act by its correlative,
Knows no possible forgiveness or deputed atonement,
Knows that the young man who composedly perilled his life and lost it, has done exceeding well for himself, without doubt,
That he who never perilled his life, but retains it to old age in riches and ease, has probably achieved nothing for himself worth mentioning;
Knows that only the person has really learned, who has learned to prefer results,
Who favors body and Soul the same,
Who perceives the indirect assuredly following the direct,
Who in his spirit in any emergency whatever neither hurries or avoids death.

6.

1. PERFECT sanity shows the master among philosophs,
Time, always without flaw, indicates itself in parts,
What always indicates the poet, is the crowd of the pleasant company of singers, and their words,
The words of the singers are the hours or minutes of the light or dark — but the words of the maker of poems are the general light and dark,
The maker of poems settles justice, reality, immortality,
His insight and power encircle things and the human race,
He is the glory and extract, thus far, of things, and of the human race.

2. The singers do not beget — only THE POET begets,
The singers are welcomed, understood, appear often enough — but rare has the day been, likewise the spot, of the birth of the maker of poems,
Not every century, or every five centuries, has contained such a day, for all its names.

3. The singers of successive hours of centuries may have ostensible names, but the name of each of them is one of the singers,
The name of each is, a heart-singer, eye-singer, hymn-singer, law-singer, ear-singer, head-singer, sweet-singer, wise-singer, droll-singer, thrift-singer, sea-singer, wit-singer, echo-singer, parlor-singer, love-singer, passion-singer, mystic-singer, fable-singer, item-singer, weeping-singer, or something else.

4. All this time, and at all times, wait the words of poems;
The greatness of sons is the exuding of the greatness of mothers and fathers,
The words of poems are the tuft and final applause of science.

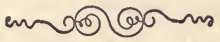
5. Divine instinct, breadth of vision, the law of reason, health, rudeness of body, withdrawnness, gayety, sun-tan, air-sweetness — such are some of the words of poems.

6. The sailor and traveller underlie the maker of poems,
The builder, geometer, mathematician, astronomer, melodist, chemist, anatomist, spiritualist, language-searcher, geologist, phrenologist, artist — all these underlie the maker of poems.

7. The words of poems give you more than poems,
They give you to form for yourself poems, religions, politics, war, peace, behavior, histories, essays, romances, and everything else,
They balance ranks, colors, races, creeds, and the sexes,
They do not seek beauty — they are sought,
Forever touching them, or close upon them, follows beauty, longing, fain, love-sick.

8. They prepare for death — yet are they not the finish, but rather the outset,
They bring none to his or her terminus, or to be content and full;

Whom they take, they take into space, to behold the
birth of stars, to learn one of the meanings,
To launch off with absolute faith — to sweep through
the ceaseless rings, and never be quiet again.



7.

I NEED no assurances — I am a man who is pre-
occupied, of his own Soul;
I do not doubt that whatever I know at a given time,
there waits for me more, which I do not know;
I do not doubt that from under the feet, and beside
the hands and face I am cognizant of, are now
looking faces I am not cognizant of — calm and
actual faces;
I do not doubt but the majesty and beauty of the
world are latent in any iota of the world;
I do not doubt there are realizations I have no idea of,
waiting for me through time, and through the
universes — also upon this earth;
I do not doubt I am limitless, and that the universes
are limitless — in vain I try to think how
limitless;
I do not doubt that the orbs, and the systems of orbs,
play their swift sports through the air on purpose
— and that I shall one day be eligible to do as
much as they, and more than they;
I do not doubt there is far more in trivialities, insects,
vulgar persons, slaves, dwarfs, weeds, rejected
refuse, than I have supposed;

I do not doubt there is more in myself than I have supposed — and more in all men and women — and more in my poems than I have supposed;

I do not doubt that temporary affairs keep on and on, millions of years;

I do not doubt interiors have their interiors, and exteriors have their exteriors — and that the eye-sight has another eye-sight, and the hearing another hearing, and the voice another voice;

I do not doubt that the passionately-wept deaths of young men are provided for — and that the deaths of young women, and the deaths of little children, are provided for;

I do not doubt that wrecks at sea, no matter what the horrors of them — no matter whose wife, child, husband, father, lover, has gone down — are provided for, to the minutest point;

I do not doubt that shallowness, meanness, malignance, are provided for;

I do not doubt that cities, you, America, the remainder of the earth, politics, freedom, degradations, are carefully provided for;

I do not doubt that whatever can possibly happen, any where, at any time, is provided for, in the inherences of things.

8.

1. WHAT shall I give? and which are my miracles?

2. Realism is mine — my miracles — Take freely,
Take without end — I offer them to you wherever your feet can carry you, or your eyes reach.

3. Why! who makes much of a miracle?
As to me, I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach, just in the edge of the water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with any one I love — or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,
Or sit at the table at dinner with my mother,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive, of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds — or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of the sun-down — or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
Or the exquisite, delicate, thin curve of the new-moon in spring;
Or whether I go among those I like best, and that like me best — mechanics, boatmen, farmers,

Or among the savans — or to the soiree — or to the opera,
Or stand a long while looking at the movements of machinery,
Or behold children at their sports,
Or the admirable sight of the perfect old man, or the perfect old woman,
Or the sick in hospitals, or the dead carried to burial,
Or my own eyes and figure in the glass,
These, with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring — yet each distinct and in its place.

4. To me, every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every cubic foot of the interior swarms with the same;
Every spear of grass — the frames, limbs, organs, of men and women, and all that concerns them,
All these to me are unspeakably perfect miracles.

5. To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim — the rocks — the motion of the waves — the ships, with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?

9.

1 THERE was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he looked upon and received with wonder, pity, love, or dread, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day, or for many years, or stretching cycles of years.

2. The early lilacs became part of this child,
And grass, and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phœbe-bird,
And the Third Month lambs, and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal, and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barn-yard, or by the mire of the pond-side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there — and the beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads — all became part of him.

3. The field-sprouts of Fourth Month and Fifth Month became part of him,
Winter-grain sprouts, and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,
And the apple-trees covered with blossoms, and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and the commonest weeds by the road;

And the old drunkard staggering home from the out-house of the tavern, whence he had lately risen,
And the school-mistress that passed on her way to the school,
And the friendly boys that passed — and the quarrelsome boys,
And the tidy and fresh-cheeked girls — and the barefoot negro boy and girl,
And all the changes of city and country, wherever he went.

4. His own parents,
He that had fathered him, and she that conceived him in her womb, and birthed him,
They gave this child more of themselves than that,
They gave him afterward every day — they and of them became part of him.

5. The mother at home, quietly placing the dishes on the supper-table,
The mother with mild words — clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person and clothes as she walks by;
The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, angered, unjust,
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture — the yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsayed — the sense of what is real — the thought if, after all, it should prove unreal,
The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time — the curious whether and how,

Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?
Men and women crowding fast in the streets — if they are not flashes and specks, what are they?
The streets themselves, and the façades of houses, and goods in the windows,
Vehicles, teams, the heavy-planked wharves — the huge crossing at the ferries,
The village on the highland, seen from afar at sunset — the river between,
Shadows, aureola and mist, light falling on roofs and gables of white or brown, three miles off,
The schooner near by, sleepily dropping down the tide — the little boat slack-towed astern,
The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,
The strata of colored clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint, away solitary by itself — the spread of purity it lies motionless in,
The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt-marsh and shore-mud;
These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth every day,
And these become part of him or her that peruses them here.

10.

1. IT is ended — I dally no more,
After to-day I inure myself to run, leap, swim, wrestle, fight,
To stand the cold or heat — to take good aim with a gun — to sail a boat — to manage horses — to beget superb children,
To speak readily and clearly — to feel at home among common people,
And to hold my own in terrible positions, on land and sea.

2. Not for an embroiderer,
(There will always be plenty of embroiderers — I welcome them also;)
But for the fibre of things, and for inherent men and women.

3. Not to chisel ornaments,
But to chisel with free stroke the heads and limbs of plenteous Supreme Gods, that The States may realize them, walking and talking.

4. Let me have my own way,
Let others promulge the laws — I will make no account of the laws,
Let others praise eminent men and hold up peace — I hold up agitation and conflict,
I praise no eminent man — I rebuke to his face the one that was thought most worthy.

5. (Who are you? you mean devil! And what are you secretly guilty of, all your life?
Will you turn aside all your life? Will you grub and chatter all your life?)

6. (And who are you — blabbing by rote, years, pages, languages, reminiscences,
Unwitting to-day that you do not know how to speak a single word?)

7. Let others finish specimens — I never finish specimens,
I shower them by exhaustless laws, as nature does, fresh and modern continually.

8. I give nothing as duties,
What others give as duties, I give as living impulses;
(Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?)

9. Let others dispose of questions — I dispose of nothing — I arouse unanswerable questions;
Who are they I see and touch, and what about them?
What about these likes of myself, that draw me so close by tender directions and indirections?

10. Let others deny the evil their enemies charge against them — but how can I the like?
Nothing ever has been, or ever can be, charged against me, half as bad as the evil I really am;
I call to the world to distrust the accounts of my friends, but listen to my enemies — as I myself do;
I charge you, too, forever, reject those who would expound me — for I cannot expound myself,

I charge that there be no theory or school founded out of me,
I charge you to leave all free, as I have left all free.

11. After me, vista!
O, I see life is not short, but immeasurably long,
I henceforth tread the world, chaste, temperate, an early riser, a gymnast, a steady grower,
Every hour the semen of centuries — and still of centuries.

12. I will follow up these continual lessons of the air, water, earth,
I perceive I have no time to lose.

11.

1. WHO learns my lesson complete?
Boss, journeyman, apprentice — churchman and atheist,
The stupid and the wise thinker — parents and offspring — merchant, clerk, porter, and customer,
Editor, author, artist, and schoolboy — Draw nigh and commence;
It is no lesson — it lets down the bars to a good lesson,
And that to another, and every one to another still.

2. The great laws take and effuse without argument,
I am of the same style, for I am their friend,

I love them quits and quits — I do not halt and make salaams.

3. I lie abstracted, and hear beautiful tales of things, and the reasons of things,
They are so beautiful, I nudge myself to listen.

4. I cannot say to any person what I hear — I cannot say it to myself — it is very wonderful.

5. It is no small matter, this round and delicious globe, moving so exactly in its orbit forever and ever, without one jolt, or the untruth of a single second,
I do not think it was made in six days, nor in ten thousand years, nor ten billions of years,
Nor planned and built one thing after another, as an architect plans and builds a house.

6. I do not think seventy years is the time of a man or woman,
Nor that seventy millions of years is the time of a man or woman,
Nor that years will ever stop the existence of me, or any one else.

7. Is it wonderful that I should be immortal? as every one is immortal,
I know it is wonderful — but my eye-sight is equally wonderful, and how I was conceived in my mother's womb is equally wonderful;

And how I was not palpable once, but am now — and was born on the last day of Fifth Month, in the Year 43 of America,

And passed from a babe, in the creeping trance of three summers and three winters, to articulate and walk — All this is equally wonderful.

8. And that I grew six feet high, and that I have become a man thirty-six years old in the Year 79 of America — and that I am here anyhow — are all equally wonderful.

9. And that my Soul embraces you this hour, and we affect each other without ever seeing each other, and never perhaps to see each other, is every bit as wonderful.

10. And that I can think such thoughts as these, is just as wonderful,

And that I can remind you, and you think them and know them to be true, is just as wonderful.

11. And that the moon spins round the earth, and on with the earth, is equally wonderful,

And that they balance themselves with the sun and stars, is equally wonderful.

12. Come! I should like to hear you tell me what there is in yourself that is not just as wonderful,

And I should like to hear the name of anything between First Day morning and Seventh Day night that is not just as wonderful.

12.

1. THIS night I am happy;
As I walk the beach where the old mother sways to and fro, singing her savage and husky song,
As I watch the stars shining — I think a thought of the clef of the universes, and of the future.

2. What can the future bring me more than I have?
Do you suppose I wish to enjoy life in other spheres?

3. I say distinctly I comprehend no better sphere than this earth,
I comprehend no better life than the life of my body.

4. I do not know what follows the death of my body,
But I know well that whatever it is, it is best for me,
And I know well that whatever is really Me shall live just as much as before.

5. I am not uneasy but I shall have good housing to myself,
But this is my first — how can I like the rest any better?
Here I grew up — the studs and rafters are grown parts of me.

6. I am not uneasy but I am to be beloved by young and old men, and to love them the same,

I suppose the pink nipples of the breasts of women with whom I shall sleep will touch the side of my face the same,
But this is the nipple of a breast of my mother, always near and always divine to me, her true child and son, whatever comes.

7. I suppose I am to be eligible to visit the stars, in my time,
I suppose I shall have myriads of new experiences — and that the experience of this earth will prove only one out of myriads;
But I believe my body and my Soul already indicate those experiences,
And I believe I shall find nothing in the stars more majestic and beautiful than I have already found on the earth,
And I believe I have this night a clew through the universes,
And I believe I have this night thought a thought of the clef of eternity.

8. A VAST SIMILITUDE interlocks all,
All spheres, grown, ungrown, small, large, suns, moons, planets, comets, asteroids,
All the substances of the same, and all that is spiritual, upon the same,
All distances of place, however wide,
All distances of time — all inanimate forms,
All Souls — all living bodies, though they be ever so different, or in different worlds,
All gaseous, watery, vegetable, mineral processes — the fishes, the brutes,

All men and women — me also,
All nations, colors, barbarisms, civilizations, languages,
All identities that have existed, or may exist, on this globe or any globe,
All lives and deaths — all of past, present, future,
This vast similitude spans them, and always has spanned, and shall forever span them, and compactly hold them.

13.

1. O BITTER sprig! Confession sprig!
In the bouquet I give you place also — I bind you in,
Proceeding no further till, humbled publicly,
I give fair warning, once for all.

2. I own that I have been sly, thievish, mean, a prevaricator, greedy, derelict,
And I own that I remain so yet.

3. What foul thought but I think it — or have in me the stuff out of which it is thought?
What in darkness in bed at night, alone or with a companion?

4. You felons on trials in courts,
You convicts in prison cells — you sentenced assassins, chained and handcuffed with iron,

Who am I, that I am not on trial, or in prison?
Me, ruthless and devilish as any, that my wrists are not chained with iron, or my ankles with iron?

5. You prostitutes flaunting over the trottoirs, or obscene in your rooms,
Who am I, that I should call you more obscene than myself?

6. O culpable! O traitor!
O I acknowledge — I exposé!
(O admirers! praise not me! compliment not me! you make me wince,
I see what you do not — I know what you do not;)
Inside these breast-bones I lie smutch'd and choked,
Beneath this face that appears so impassive, hell's tides continually run,
Lusts and wickedness are acceptable to me,
I walk with delinquents with passionate love,
I feel I am of them — I belong to those convicts and prostitutes myself,
And henceforth I will not deny them — for how can I deny myself?

14.

UNFOLDED out of the folds of the woman, man comes unfolded, as is always to come unfolded,
Unfolded only out of the superbest woman of the earth, is to come the superbest man of the earth,
Unfolded out of the friendliest woman, is to come the friendliest man,
Unfolded only out of the perfect body of a woman, can a man be formed of perfect body,
Unfolded only out of the inimitable poem of the woman, can come the poems of man — only thence have my poems come,
Unfolded out of the strong and arrogant woman I love, only thence can appear the strong and arrogant man I love,
Unfolded by brawny embraces from the well-muscled woman I love, only thence come the brawny embraces of the man,
Unfolded out of the folds of the woman's brain, come all the folds of the man's brain, duly obedient,
Unfolded out of the justice of the woman, all justice is unfolded,
Unfolded out of the sympathy of the woman is all sympathy;
A man is a great thing upon the earth, and through eternity — but every jot of the greatness of man is unfolded out of woman,
First the man is shaped in the woman, he can then be shaped in himself.

15.

1. NIGHT on the Prairies;
I walk by myself — I stand and look at the stars, which I think now I never realized before.

2. Now I absorb immortality and peace,
I admire death and test propositions.

3. How plenteous! How spiritual! How resumé!
The same Old Man and Soul — the same old aspirations, and the same content.

4. I was thinking the day most splendid, till I saw what the not-day exhibited,
I was thinking this globe enough, till there tumbled upon me myriads of other globes.

5. Now while the great thoughts of space and eternity fill me, I will measure myself by them,
And now, touched with the lives of other globes, arrived as far along as those of the earth,
Or waiting to arrive, or passed on farther than those of the earth,
I henceforth no more ignore them than I ignore my own life,
Or the lives on the earth arrived as far as mine, or waiting to arrive.

6. O how plainly I see now that life cannot exhibit all to me — as the day cannot,
O I see that I am to wait for what will be exhibited by death.

16.

Sea-water, and all living below it,
Forests at the bottom of the sea — the branches and leaves,
Sea-lettuce, vast lichens, strange flowers and seeds — the thick tangle, the openings, and the pink turf,
Different colors, pale gray and green, purple, white, and gold — the play of light through the water,
Dumb swimmers there among the rocks — coral, gluten, grass, rushes — and the aliment of the swimmers,
Sluggish existences grazing there, suspended, or slowly crawling close to the bottom,
The sperm-whale at the surface, blowing air and spray, or disporting with his flukes,
The leaden-eyed shark, the walrus, the turtle, the hairy sea-leopard, and the sting-ray;
Passions there — wars, pursuits, tribes — sight in those ocean-depths — breathing that thick-breathing air, as so many do,
The change thence to the sight here, and to the subtle air breathed by beings like us, who walk this sphere;
The change onward from ours to that of beings who walk other spheres.

17.

I SIT and look out upon all the sorrows of the world, and upon all oppression and shame,
I hear secret convulsive sobs from young men, at anguish with themselves, remorseful after deeds done;
I see, in low life, the mother misused by her children, dying, neglected, gaunt, desperate,
I see the wife misused by her husband — I see the treacherous seducer of the young woman,
I mark the ranklings of jealousy and unrequited love, attempted to be hid — I see these sights on the earth,
I see the workings of battle, pestilence, tyranny — I see martyrs and prisoners,
I observe a famine at sea — I observe the sailors casting lots who shall be killed, to preserve the lives of the rest,
I observe the slights and degradations cast by arrogant persons upon laborers, the poor, and upon negroes, and the like;
All these — All the meanness and agony without end, I sitting, look out upon,
See, hear, and am silent.

18.

1. O ME, man of slack faith so long!
Standing aloof — denying portions so long;
Me with mole's eyes, unrisen to buoyancy and vision — unfree,
Only aware to-day of compact, all-diffused truth,
Discovering to-day there is no lie, or form of lie, and can be none, but grows just as inevitably upon itself as the truth does upon itself,
Or as any law of the earth, or any natural production of the earth does.

2. (This is curious, and may not be realized immediately — But it must be realized;
I feel in myself that I represent falsehoods equally with the rest,
And that the universe does.)

3. Where has failed a perfect return, indifferent of lies or the truth?
Is it upon the ground, or in water or fire? or in the spirit of man? or in the meat and blood?

4. Meditating among liars, and retreating sternly into myself, I see that there are really no liars or lies after all,
And that nothing fails its perfect return — And that what are called lies are perfect returns,

And that each thing exactly represents itself, and what has preceded it,
And that the truth includes all, and is compact, just as much as space is compact,
And that there is no flaw or vacuum in the amount of the truth — but that all is truth without exception,
And henceforth I will go celebrate anything I see or am,
And sing and laugh, and deny nothing.

19.

FORMS, qualities, lives, humanity, language, thoughts,
The ones known, and the ones unknown — the ones on the stars,
The stars themselves, some shaped, others unshaped,
Wonders as of those countries — the soil, trees, cities, inhabitants, whatever they may be,
Splendid suns, the moons and rings, the countless combinations and effects,
Such-like, and as good as such-like, visible here or anywhere, stand provided for in a handful of space, which I extend my arm and half enclose with my hand,
That contains the start of each and all — the virtue, the germs of all;
That is the theory as of origins.

20.

So far, and so far, and on toward the end,
Singing what is sung in this book, from the irresistible impulses of me;
But whether I continue beyond this book, to maturity,
Whether I shall dart forth the true rays, the ones that wait unfired,
(Did you think the sun was shining its brightest?
No — it has not yet fully risen;)
Whether I shall complete what is here started,
Whether I shall attain my own height, to justify these, yet unfinished,
Whether I shall make THE POEM OF THE NEW WORLD, transcending all others — depends, rich persons, upon you,
Depends, whoever you are now filling the current Presidentiad, upon you,
Upon you, Governor, Mayor, Congressman,
And you, contemporary America.

21.

1. Now I make a leaf of Voices — for I have found nothing mightier than they are,
And I have found that no word spoken, but is beautiful, in its place.

2. O what is it in me that makes me tremble so at voices?

3. Surely, whoever speaks to me in the right voice, him or her I shall follow, as the waters follow the moon, silently, with fluid steps, any where around the globe.

4. Now I believe that all waits for the right voices;
Where is the practised and perfect organ? Where is the developed Soul?
For I see every word uttered thence has deeper, sweeter, new sounds, impossible on less terms.

5. I see brains and lips closed — I see tympans and temples unstruck,
Until that comes which has the quality to strike and to unclose,
Until that comes which has the quality to bring forth what lies slumbering, forever ready, in all words.

22.

1. WHAT am I, after all, but a child, pleased with the sound of my own name? repeating it over and over,
I cannot tell why it affects me so much, when I hear it from women's voices, and from men's voices, or from my own voice,
I stand apart to hear — it never tires me.

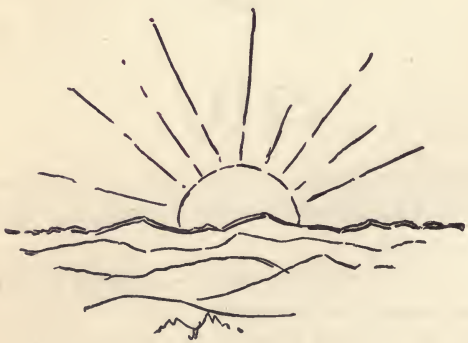
2. To you, your name also,
Did you think there was nothing but two or three pronunciations in the sound of your name?

23.

LOCATIONS and times — what is it in me that meets them all, whenever and wherever, and makes me at home?
Forms, colors, densities, odors — what is it in me that corresponds with them?
What is the relation between me and them?

24.

LIFT me close to your face till I whisper,
What you are holding is in reality no book, nor part of a book,
It is a man, flushed and full-blooded — it is I — *So long!*
We must separate — Here! take from my lips this kiss,
Whoever you are, I give it especially to you;
So long — and I hope we shall meet again.



Salut au Monde!

1. O TAKE my hand, Walt Whitman!
Such gliding wonders! Such sights and sounds!
Such joined unended links, each hooked to the next!
Each answering all — each sharing the earth with all.

2. What widens within you, Walt Whitman?
What waves and soils exuding?
What climes? What persons and lands are here?
Who are the infants? Some playing, some slumbering?
Who are the girls? Who are the married women?
Who are the three old men going slowly with their arms about each others' necks?
What rivers are these? What forests and fruits are these?
What are the mountains called that rise so high in the mists?
What myriads of dwellings are they, filled with dwellers?

3. Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens,
Asia, Africa, Europe, are to the east — America is provided for in the west,

Banding the bulge of the earth winds the hot equ...,
Curiously north and south turn the axis-ends;
Within me is the longest day — the sun wheels in slanting rings — it does not set for months,
Stretched in due time within me the midnight sun just rises above the horizon, and sinks again,
Within me zones, seas, cataracts, plains, volcanoes, groups,
Oceanica, Australasia, Polynesia, and the great West Indian islands.

4. What do you hear, Walt Whitman?

5. I hear the workman singing, and the farmer's wife singing,
I hear in the distance the sounds of children, and of animals early in the day,
I hear quick rifle-cracks from the riflemen of East Tennessee and Kentucky, hunting on hills,
I hear emulous shouts of Australians, pursuing the wild horse,
I hear the Spanish dance, with castanets, in the chestnut shade, to the rebeck and guitar,
I hear continual echoes from the Thames,
I hear fierce French liberty songs,
I hear of the Italian boat-sculler the musical recitative of old poems,
I hear the Virginia plantation chorus of negroes, of a harvest night, in the glare of pine knots,
I hear the strong baritone of the 'long-shore-men of Manhatta,
I hear the stevedores unlading the cargoes, and singing,

I hear the screams of the water-fowl of solitary north-west lakes,
I hear the rustling pattering of locusts, as they strike the grain and grass with the showers of their terrible clouds,
I hear the Coptic refrain, toward sundown, pensively falling on the breast of the black venerable vast mother, the Nile,
I hear the bugles of raft-tenders on the streams of Kanada,
I hear the chirp of the Mexican muleteer, and the bells of the mule,
I hear the Arab muezzin, calling from the top of the mosque,
I hear Christian priests at the altars of their churches — I hear the responsive base and soprano,
I hear the wail of utter despair of the white-haired Irish grand-parents, when they learn the death of their grand-son,
I hear the cry of the Cossack, and the sailor's voice, putting to sea at Okotsk,
I hear the wheeze of the slave-coffle, as the slaves march on — as the husky gangs pass on by twos and threes, fastened together with wrist-chains and ankle-chains,
I hear the entreaties of women tied up for punishment — I hear the sibilant whisk of thongs through the air;
I hear the Hebrew reading his records and psalms,
I hear the rhythmic myths of the Greeks, and the strong legends of the Romans,
I hear the tale of the divine life and bloody death of the beautiful God, the Christ,

I hear the Hindoo teaching his favorite pupil the loves, wars, adages, transmitted safely to this day from poets who wrote three thousand years ago.

6. What do you see, Walt Whitman ?
Who are they who salute, and that one after another salute you ?

7. I see a great round wonder rolling through the air,
I see diminute farms, hamlets, ruins, grave-yards, jails, factories, palaces, hovels, huts of barbarians, tents of nomads, upon the surface,
I see the shaded part on one side, where the sleepers are sleeping — and the sun-lit part on the other side,
I see the curious silent change of the light and shade,
I see distant lands, as real and near to the inhabitants of them, as my land is to me.

8. I see plenteous waters,
I see mountain peaks — I see the sierras of Andes and Alleghanies, where they range,
I see plainly the Himmalehs, Chian Shahs, Altays, Gauts,
I see the Rocky Mountains, and the Peak of Winds,
I see the Styrian Alps, and the Karnac Alps,
I see the Pyrenees, Balks, Carpathians — and to the north the Dofrafields, and off at sea Mount Hecla,
I see Vesuvius and Etna — I see the Anahuacs,
I see the Mountains of the Moon, and the Snow Mountains, and the Red Mountains of Madagascar,
I see the Vermont hills, and the long string of Cordilleras ;

I see the vast deserts of Western America,
I see the Libyan, Arabian, and Asiatic deserts;
I see huge dreadful Arctic and Antarctic icebergs,
I see the superior oceans and the inferior ones — the Atlantic and Pacific, the sea of Mexico, the Brazilian sea, and the sea of Peru,
The Japan waters, those of Hindostan, the China Sea, and the Gulf of Guinea,
The spread of the Baltic, Caspian, Bothnia, the British shores, and the Bay of Biscay,
The clear-sunned Mediterranean, and from one to another of its islands,
The inland fresh-tasted seas of North America,
The White Sea, and the sea around Greenland.

9. I behold the mariners of the world,
Some are in storms — some in the night, with the watch on the look-out,
Some drifting helplessly — some with contagious diseases.

10. I behold the steam-ships of the world,
Some double the Cape of Storms — some Cape Verde — others Cape Guardafui, Bon, or Bajadore,
Others Dondra Head — others pass the Straits of Sunda — others Cape Lopatka — others Behring's Straits,
Others Cape Horn — others the Gulf of Mexico, or along Cuba or Hayti — others Hudson's Bay or Baffin's Bay,
Others pass the Straits of Dover — others enter the Wash — others the Firth of Solway — others round Cape Clear — others the Land's End,

Others traverse the Zuyder Zee, or the Scheld,
Others add to the exits and entrances at Sandy Hook,
Others to the comers and goers at Gibraltar, or the Dardanelles,
Others sternly push their way through the northern winter-packs,
Others descend or ascend the Obi or the Lena,
Others the Niger or the Congo — others the Indus, the Burampooter and Cambodia,
Others wait at the wharves of Manahatta, steamed up, ready to start,
Wait, swift and swarthy, in the ports of Australia,
Wait at Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Marseilles, Lisbon, Naples, Hamburg, Bremen, Bourdeaux, the Hague, Copenhagen,
Wait at Valparaiso, Rio Janeiro, Panama,
Wait at their moorings at Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, New Orleans, Galveston, San Francisco.

11. I see the tracks of the rail-roads of the earth,
I see them welding State to State, city to city, through North America;
I see them in Great Britain, I see them in Europe,
I see them in Asia and in Africa.

12. I see the electric telegraphs of the earth,
I see the filaments of the news of the wars, deaths, losses, gains, passions, of my race.

13. I see the long river-stripes of the earth,
I see where the Mississippi flows — I see where the Columbia flows,

I see the Great River, and the Falls of Niagara,
I see the Amazon and the Paraguay,
I see the four great rivers of China, the Amour, the Yellow River, the Yiang-tse, and the Pearl;
I see where the Seine flows, and where the Loire, the Rhone, and the Guadalquiver flow,
I see the windings of the Volga, the Dnieper, the Oder,
I see the Tuscan going down the Arno, and the Venetian along the Po,
I see the Greek seaman sailing out of Egina bay.

14. I see the site of the old empire of Assyria, and that of Persia, and that of India,
I see the falling of the Ganges over the high rim of Saukara.

15. I see the place of the idea of the Deity incarnated by avatars in human forms,
I see the spots of the successions of priests on the earth — oracles, sacrificers, brahmins, sabians, lamas, monks, muftis, exhorters;
I see where druids walked the groves of Mona — I see the mistletoe and vervain,
I see the temples of the deaths of the bodies of Gods — I see the old signifiers.

16. I see Christ once more eating the bread of his last supper, in the midst of youths and old persons,
I see where the strong divine young man, the Hercules, toiled faithfully and long, and then died,
I see the place of the innocent rich life and hapless fate of the beautiful nocturnal son, the full-limbed Bacchus,

I see Kneph, blooming, dressed in blue, with the crown of feathers on his head,
I see Hermes, unsuspected, dying, well-beloved, saying to the people, *Do not weep for me,*
This is not my true country, I have lived banished from my true country — I now go back there,
I return to the celestial sphere, where every one goes in his turn.

17. I see the battle-fields of the earth — grass grows upon them, and blossoms and corn,
I see the tracks of ancient and modern expeditions.

18. I see the nameless masonries, venerable messages of the unknown events, heroes, records of the earth.

19. I see the places of the sagas,
I see pine-trees and fir-trees torn by northern blasts,
I see granite boulders and cliffs — I see green meadows and lakes,
I see the burial-cairns of Scandinavian warriors,
I see them raised high with stones, by the marge of restless oceans, that the dead men's spirits, when they wearied of their quiet graves, might rise up through the mounds, and gaze on the tossing billows, and be refreshed by storms, immensity, liberty, action.

20. I see the steppes of Asia,
I see the tumuli of Mongolia — I see the tents of Kalmucks and Baskirs,
I see the nomadic tribes, with herds of oxen and cows,
I see the table-lands notched with ravines — I see the jungles and deserts,

I see the camel, the wild steed, the bustard, the fat-tailed sheep, the antelope, and the burrowing wolf.

21 I see the high-lands of Abyssinia,
I see flocks of goats feeding, and see the fig-tree, tamarind, date,
And see fields of teff-wheat, and see the places of verdure and gold.

22 I see the Brazilian vaquero,
I see the Bolivian ascending Mount Sorata,
I see the Wacho crossing the plains — I see the incomparable rider of horses with his lasso on his arm,
I see over the pampas the pursuit of wild cattle for their hides.

23 I see little and large sea-dots, some inhabited, some uninhabited;
I see two boats with nets, lying off the shore of Paumanok, quite still,
I see ten fishermen waiting — they discover now a thick school of mossbonkers — they drop the joined seine-ends in the water,
The boats separate — they diverge and row off, each on its rounding course to the beach, enclosing the mossbonkers,
The net is drawn in by a windlass by those who stop ashore,
Some of the fishermen lounge in the boats — others stand negligently ankle-deep in the water, poised on strong legs,

The boats are partly drawn up — the water slaps against them,
On the sand, in heaps and winrows, well out from the water, lie the green-backed spotted mossbonkers.

24. I see the despondent red man in the west, lingering about the banks of Mòingo, and about Lake Pepin,
He has heard the quail and beheld the honey-bee, and sadly prepared to depart.

25. I see the regions of snow and ice,
I see the sharp-eyed Samoiede and the Finn,
I see the seal-seeker in his boat, poising his lance,
I see the Siberian on his slight-built sledge, drawn by dogs,
I see the porpoise-hunters — I see the whale-crews of the South Pacific and the North Atlantic,
I see the cliffs, glaciers, torrents, valleys, of Switzerland — I mark the long winters, and the isolation.

26. I see the cities of the earth, and make myself at random a part of them,
I am a real Parisian,
I am a habitan of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Constantinople,
I am of Adelaide, Sidney, Melbourne,
I am of London, Manchester, Bristol, Edinburgh, Limerick,
I am of Madrid, Cadiz, Barcelona, Oporto, Lyons, Brussels, Berne, Frankfort, Stuttgart, Turin, Florence,

I belong in Moscow, Cracow, Warsaw — or northward in Christiania or Stockholm — or in Siberian Irkutsk — or in some street in Iceland;
I descend upon all those cities, and rise from them again.

27. I see vapors exhaling from unexplored countries,
I see the savage types, the bow and arrow, the poisoned splint, the fetish, and the obi.

28. I see African and Asiatic towns,
I see Algiers, Tripoli, Derne, Mogadore, Timbuctoo, Monrovia,
I see the swarms of Pekin, Canton, Benares, Delhi, Calcutta, Yedo,
I see the Kruman in his hut, and the Dahoman and Ashantee-man in their huts,
I see the Turk smoking opium in Aleppo,
I see the picturesque crowds at the fairs of Khiva, and those of Herat,
I see Teheran — I see Muscat and Medina, and the intervening sands — I see the caravans toiling onward;
I see Egypt and the Egyptians — I see the pyramids and obelisks,
I look on chiselled histories, songs, philosophies, cut in slabs of sand-stone, or on granite blocks,
I see at Memphis mummy-pits, containing mummies, embalmed, swathed in linen cloth, lying there many centuries,
I look on the fall'n Theban, the large-ball'd eyes, the side-drooping neck, the hands folded across the breast.

29. I see the menials of the earth, laboring,
I see the prisoners in the prisons,
I see the defective human bodies of the earth,
I see the blind, the deaf and dumb, idiots, hunchbacks, lunatics,
I see the pirates, thieves, betrayers, murderers, slave-makers of the earth,
I see the helpless infants, and the helpless old men and women.

30. I see male and female everywhere,
I see the serene brotherhood of philosophs,
I see the constructiveness of my race,
I see the results of the perseverance and industry of my race,
I see ranks, colors, barbarisms, civilizations — I go among them — I mix indiscriminately,
And I salute all the inhabitants of the earth.

31. You, where you are!
You daughter or son of England!
You of the mighty Slavic tribes and empires! you Russ in Russia!
You dim-descended, black, divine-souled African, large, fine-headed, nobly-formed, superbly destined, on equal terms with me!
You Norwegian! Swede! Dane! Icelander! you Prussian!
You Spaniard of Spain! you Portuguese!
You Frenchwoman and Frenchman of France!
You Belge! you liberty-lover of the Netherlands!
You sturdy Austrian! you Lombard! Hun! Bohemian! farmer of Styria!

You neighbor of the Danube!
You working-man of the Rhine, the Elbe, or the Weser! you working-woman too!
You Sardinian! you Bavarian! you Swabian! Saxon! Wallachian! Bulgarian!
You citizen of Prague! you Roman! Neapolitan! Greek!
You lithe matador in the arena at Seville!
You mountaineer living lawlessly on the Taurus or Caucasus!
You Bokh horse-herd, watching your mares and stallions feeding!
You beautiful-bodied Persian, at full speed in the saddle, shooting arrows to the mark!
You Chinaman and Chinawoman of China! you Tartar of Tartary!
You women of the earth subordinated at your tasks!
You Jew journeying in your old age through every risk, to stand once on Syrian ground!
You other Jews waiting in all lands for your Messiah!
You thoughtful Armenian, pondering by some stream of the Euphrates! you peering amid the ruins of Nineveh! you ascending Mount Ararat!
You foot-worn pilgrim welcoming the far-away sparkle of the minarets of Mecca!
You sheiks along the stretch from Suez to Babelmandel, ruling your families and tribes!
You olive-grower tending your fruit on fields of Nazareth, Damascus, or Lake Tiberias!
You Thibet trader on the wide inland, or bargaining in the shops of Lassa!
You Japanese man or woman! you liver in Madagascar, Ceylon, Sumatra, Borneo!

All you continentals of Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, indifferent of place!
All you on the numberless islands of the archipelagoes of the sea!
And you of centuries hence, when you listen to me!
And you, each and everywhere, whom I specify not, but include just the same!
Health to you! Good will to you all — from me and America sent,
For we acknowledge you all and each.

31. Each of us inevitable,
Each of us limitless — each of us with his or her right upon the earth,
Each of us allowed the eternal purport of the earth,
Each of us here as divinely as any is here.

32. You Hottentot with clicking palate!
You woolly-haired hordes! you white or black owners of slaves!
You owned persons, dropping sweat-drops or blood-drops!
You human forms with the fathomless ever-impressive countenances of brutes!
You poor koboo whom the meanest of the rest look down upon, for all your glimmering language and spirituality!
You low expiring aborigines of the hills of Utah, Oregon, California!
You dwarfed Kamtschatkan, Greenlander, Lapp!
You Austral negro, naked, red, sooty, with protrusive lip, grovelling, seeking your food!
You Caffre, Berber, Soudanese!

You haggard, uncouth, untutored Bedowee!
You plague-swarms in Madras, Nankin, Kaubul, Cairo!
You bather bathing in the Ganges!
You benighted roamer of Amazonia! you Patagonian! you Fegee-man!
You peon of Mexico! you Russian serf! you slave of Carolina, Texas, Tennessee!
I do not prefer others so very much before you either,
I do not say one word against you, away back there, where you stand,
(You will come forward in due time to my side.)

33. My spirit has passed in compassion and determination around the whole earth,
I have looked for equals and lovers, and found them ready for me in all lands;
I think some divine rapport has equalized me with them.

34. O vapors! I think I have risen with you, and moved away to distant continents, and fallen down there, for reasons,
I think I have blown with you, O winds,
O waters, I have fingered every shore with you.

35. I have run through what any river or strait of the globe has run through,
I have taken my stand on the bases of peninsulas, and on the highest embedded rocks, to cry thence.

36. *Salut au Monde!*
What cities the light or warmth penetrates, I penetrate those cities myself,

All islands to which birds wing their way, I wing my way myself.

37. Toward all,
I raise high the perpendicular hand — I make the signal,
To remain after me in sight forever,
For all the haunts and homes of men.

Poem of Joys.

1. O to make a most jubilant poem!
   O full of music! Full of manhood, womanhood, infancy!
   O full of common employments! Full of grain and trees.

2. O for the voices of animals! O for the swiftness and balance of fishes!
   O for the dropping of rain-drops in a poem!
   O for the sunshine and motion of waves in a poem.

3. O to be on the sea! the wind, the wide waters around;
   O to sail in a ship under full sail at sea.

4. O the joy of my spirit! It is uncaged! It darts like lightning!
   It is not enough to have this globe, or a certain time —I will have thousands of globes, and all time.

5. O the engineer's joys!
   To go with a locomotive!

To hear the hiss of steam — the merry shriek — the steam-whistle — the laughing locomotive!
To push with resistless way, and speed off in the distance.

6. O the horseman's and horsewoman's joys!
The saddle — the gallop — the pressure upon the seat — the cool gurgling by the ears and hair.

7. O the fireman's joys!
I hear the alarm at dead of night,
I hear bells — shouts! — I pass the crowd — I run!
The sight of the flames maddens me with pleasure.

8. O the joy of the strong-brawned fighter, towering in the arena, in perfect condition, conscious of power, thirsting to meet his opponent.

9. O the joy of that vast elemental sympathy which only the human Soul is capable of generating and emitting in steady and limitless floods.

10. O the mother's joys!
The watching — the endurance — the precious love — the anguish — the patiently yielded life.

11. O the joy of increase, growth, recuperation,
The joy of soothing and pacifying — the joy of concord and harmony.

12. O to go back to the place where I was born!
O to hear the birds sing once more!
To ramble about the house and barn, and over the fields, once more,

And through the orchard and along the old lanes once more.

13. O male and female!
O the presence of women! (I swear, nothing is more exquisite to me than the presence of women;)
O for the girl, my mate! O for happiness with my mate!
O the young man as I pass! O I am sick after the friendship of him who, I fear, is indifferent to me.

14. O the streets of cities!
The flitting faces — the expressions, eyes, feet, costumes! O I cannot tell how welcome they are to me;
O of men — of women toward me as I pass — The memory of only one look — the boy lingering and waiting.

15. O to have been brought up on bays, lagoons, creeks, or along the coast!
O to continue and be employed there all my life!
O the briny and damp smell — the shore — the salt weeds exposed at low water,
The work of fishermen — the work of the eel-fisher and clam-fisher.

16. O it is I!
I come with my clam-rake and spade! I come with my eel-spear;
Is the tide out? I join the group of clam-diggers on the flats,

I laugh and work with them — I joke at my work, like a mettlesome young man.

17. In winter I take my eel-basket and eel-spear and travel out on foot on the ice — I have a small axe to cut holes in the ice;
Behold me, well-clothed, going gayly, or returning in the afternoon — my brood of tough boys accompanying me,
My brood of grown and part-grown boys, who love to be with none else so well as they love to be with me,
By day to work with me, and by night to sleep with me.

18. Or, another time, in warm weather, out in a boat, to lift the lobster-pots, where they are sunk with heavy stones, (I know the buoys;)
O the sweetness of the Fifth Month morning upon the water, as I row, just before sunrise, toward the buoys;
I pull the wicker pots up slantingly — the dark green lobsters are desperate with their claws, as I take them out — I insert wooden pegs in the joints of their pincers,
I go to all the places, one after another, and then row back to the shore,
There, in a huge kettle of boiling water, the lobsters shall be boiled till their color becomes scarlet.

19. Or, another time, mackerel-taking,
Voracious, mad for the hook, near the surface, they seem to fill the water for miles;

Or, another time, fishing for rock-fish in Chesapeake Bay — I one of the brown-faced crew;
Or, another time, trailing for blue-fish off Paumanok, I stand with braced body,
My left foot is on the gunwale — my right arm throws the coils of slender rope,
In sight around me the quick veering and darting of fifty skiffs, my companions.

20. O boating on the rivers!
The voyage down the Niagara, (the St. Lawrence,) — the superb scenery — the steamers,
The ships sailing — the Thousand Islands — the occasional timber-raft, and the raftsmen with long-reaching sweep-oars,
The little huts on the rafts, and the stream of smoke when they cook supper at evening.

21. O something pernicious and dread!
Something far away from a puny and pious life!
Something unproved! Something in a trance!
Something escaped from the anchorage, and driving free.

22. O to work in mines, or forging iron!
Foundry casting — the foundry itself — the rude high roof — the ample and shadowed space,
The furnace — the hot liquid poured out and running.

23. O the joys of the soldier!
To feel the presence of a brave general! to feel his sympathy!
To behold his calmness! to be warmed in the rays of his smile!

To go to battle! to hear the bugles play, and the drums beat!
To hear the artillery! to see the glittering of the bayonets and musket-barrels in the sun!
To see men fall and die and not complain!
To taste the savage taste of blood! to be so devilish!
To gloat so over the wounds and deaths of the enemy.

24. O the whaleman's joys! O I cruise my old cruise again!
I feel the ship's motion under me — I feel the Atlantic breezes fanning me,
I hear the cry again sent down from the mast-head, *There she blows*,
Again I spring up the rigging, to look with the rest — We see — we descend, wild with excitement,
I leap in the lowered boat — We row toward our prey, where he lies,
We approach, stealthy and silent — I see the mountainous mass, lethargic, basking,
I see the harpooner standing up — I see the weapon dart from his vigorous arm;
O swift, again, now, far out in the ocean, the wounded whale, settling, running to windward, tows me,
Again I see him rise to breathe — We row close again,
I see a lance driven through his side, pressed deep, turned in the wound,
Again we back off — I see him settle again — the life is leaving him fast,
As he rises, he spouts blood — I see him swim in circles narrower and narrower, swiftly cutting the water — I see him die,

He gives one convulsive leap in the centre of the circle, and then falls flat and still in the bloody foam.

25. O the old manhood of me, my joy!
My children and grand-children — my white hair and beard,
My largeness, calmness, majesty, out of the long stretch of my life.

26. O the ripened joy of womanhood!
O perfect happiness at last!
I am more than eighty years of age — my hair, too, is pure white — I am the most venerable mother;
How clear is my mind! how all people draw nigh to me!
What attractions are these, beyond any before? what bloom, more than the bloom of youth?
What beauty is this that descends upon me, and rises out of me?

27. O the joy of my Soul leaning poised on itself — receiving identity through materials, and loving them — observing characters, and absorbing them;
O my Soul, vibrated back to me, from them — from facts, sight, hearing, touch, my phrenology, reason, articulation, comparison, memory, and the like;
O the real life of my senses and flesh, transcending my senses and flesh;
O my body, done with materials — my sight, done with my material eyes;
O what is proved to me this day, beyond cavil, that it is not my material eyes which finally see,

Nor my material body which finally loves, walks, laughs, shouts, embraces, procreates.

28. O the farmer's joys!
Ohioan's, Illinoisian's, Wisconsinese', Kanadian's, Iowan's, Kansian's, Missourian's, Oregonese' joys,
To rise at peep of day, and pass forth nimbly to work,
To plough land in the fall for winter-sown crops,
To plough land in the spring for maize,
To train orchards — to graft the trees — to gather apples in the fall.

29. O the pleasure with trees!
The orchard — the forest — the oak, cedar, pine, pekan-tree,
The honey-locust, black-walnut, cottonwood, and magnolia.

30. O Death!
O the beautiful touch of Death, soothing and benumbing a few moments, for reasons;
O that of myself, discharging my excrementitious body, to be burned, or rendered to powder, or buried,
My real body doubtless left to me for other spheres,
My voided body, nothing more to me, returning to the purifications, further offices, eternal uses of the earth.

31. O to bathe in the swimming-bath, or in a good place along shore!
To splash the water! to walk ankle-deep; to race naked along the shore.

32. O to realize space!
The plenteousness of all — that there are no bounds;
To emerge, and be of the sky — of the sun and moon, and the flying clouds, as one with them.

33. O, while I live, to be the ruler of life — not a slave,
To meet life as a powerful conqueror,
No fumes — no ennui — no more complaints or scornful criticisms.

34. O me repellent and ugly!
O to these proud laws of the air, the water, and the ground, proving my interior Soul impregnable,
And nothing exterior shall ever take command of me.

35. O to attract by more than attraction!
How it is I know not — yet behold! the something which obeys none of the rest,
It is offensive, never defensive — yet how magnetic it draws.

36. O the joy of suffering!
To struggle against great odds! to meet enemies undaunted!
To be entirely alone with them! to find how much I can stand!
To look strife, torture, prison, popular odium, death, face to face!
To mount the scaffold! to advance to the muzzles of guns with perfect nonchalance!
To be indeed a God!

37. O the gleesome saunter over fields and hill-sides!
The leaves and flowers of the commonest weeds — the moist fresh stillness of the woods,
The exquisite smell of the earth at day-break, and all through the forenoon.

38. O love-branches! love-root! love-apples!
O chaste and electric torrents! O mad-sweet drops.

39. O the orator's joys!
To inflate the chest — to roll the thunder of the voice out from the ribs and throat,
To make the people rage, weep, hate, desire, with yourself,
To lead America — to quell America with a great tongue.

40. O the joy of a manly self-hood!
Personality — to be servile to none — to defer to none — not to any tyrant, known or unknown,
To walk with erect carriage, a step springy and elastic,
To look with calm gaze, or with a flashing eye,
To speak with a full and sonorous voice, out of a broad chest,
To confront with your personality all the other personalities of the earth.

41. O to have my life henceforth my poem of joys!
To dance, clap hands, exult, shout, skip, leap, roll on, float on,
An athlete -- full of rich words — full of joys.

A WORD OUT OF THE SEA.

Out of the rocked cradle,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the boy's mother's womb, and from the nipples of her breasts,
Out of the Ninth Month midnight,
Over the sterile sands, and the fields beyond, where the child, leaving his bed, wandered alone, bare-headed, barefoot,
Down from the showered halo,
Up from the mystic play of shadows, twining and twisting as if they were alive,
Out from the patches of briers and blackberries,
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
From your memories, sad brother — from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
From under that yellow half-moon, late-risen, and swollen as if with tears,
From those beginning notes of sickness and love, there in the transparent mist,
From the thousand responses of my heart, never to cease,

From the myriad thence-aroused words,
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
From such, as now they start, the scene revisiting,
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
Borne hither — ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
A man — yet by these tears a little boy again,
Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,
Taking all hints to use them — but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.

REMINISCENCE.

1. ONCE, Paumanok,
When the snows had melted, and the Fifth Month grass was growing,
Up this sea-shore, in some briers,
Two guests from Alabama — two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs, spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird, to and fro, near at hand,
And every day the she-bird, crouched on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

2. *Shine! Shine!*
Pour down your warmth, great Sun!
While we bask — we two together.

3. *Two together!*
Winds blow South, or winds blow North,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
If we two but keep together.

4. Till of a sudden,
May-be killed, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouched not on the nest,
Nor returned that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appeared again.

5. And thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of the sea,
And at night, under the full of the moon, in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals, the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

6. *Blow! Blow!*
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait, till you blow my mate to me.

7. Yes, when the stars glistened,
All night long, on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,
Down, almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer, wonderful, causing tears.

8. He called on his mate,
He poured forth the meanings which I, of all men, know.

9. Yes, my brother, I know,
The rest might not — but I have treasured every note,
For once, and more than once, dimly, down to the beach gliding,
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listened long and long.

10. Listened, to keep, to sing — now translating the notes,
Following you, my brother.

11. *Soothe! Soothe!*
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind, embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me.

12. *Low hangs the moon — it rose late,*
O it is lagging — O I think it is heavy with love.

13. *O madly the sea pushes upon the land,*
With love — with love.

14. *O night!*
O do I not see my love fluttering out there among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

15. *Loud! Loud!*
Loud I call to you my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

16. *Low-hanging moon!*
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape of my mate!
O moon, do not keep her from me any longer.

17. *Land! O land!*
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again, if you would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.

18. *O rising stars!*
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise with some of you.

19. *O throat!*
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.

20. *Shake out, carols!*
Solitary here — the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! Death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O, under that moon, where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless, despairing carols.

21. *But soft!*
Sink low — soft!
Soft! Let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment, you husky-noised sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint — I must be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.

22. *Hither, my love!*
Here I am! Here!
With this just-sustained note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you, my love.

23. *Do not be decoyed elsewhere!*
That is the whistle of the wind — it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.

24. *O darkness! O in vain!*
O I am very sick and sorrowful.

25. *O brown halo in the sky, near the moon, drooping upon the sea!*
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
O all — and I singing uselessly all the night.

26. *Murmur! Murmur on!*
O murmurs — you yourselves make me continue to sing, I know not why.

27. *O past! O joy!*
In the air — in the woods — over fields,
Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved!
Loved — but no more with me,
We two together no more.

28. The aria sinking,
All else continuing — the stars shining,
The winds blowing — the notes of the wondrous bird echoing,
With angry moans the fierce old mother yet, as ever, incessantly moaning,
On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
The yellow half-moon, enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
The boy extatic — with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,
The love in the heart pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,
The aria's meaning, the ears, the Soul, swiftly depositing,
The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
The colloquy there — the trio — each uttering,
The undertone — the savage old mother, incessantly crying,
To the boy's Soul's questions sullenly timing — some drowned secret hissing,
To the outsetting bard of love.

29. Bird! (then said the boy's Soul,)
Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it mostly to me?
For I that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping,
Now that I have heard you,

Now in a moment I know what I am for — I awake,
And already a thousand singers — a thousand songs,
clearer, louder, more sorrowful than yours,
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life
within me,
Never to die.

30. O throes!
O you demon, singing by yourself — projecting me,
O solitary me, listening — never more shall I cease
imitating, perpetuating you,
Never more shall I escape,
Never more shall the reverberations,
Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent
from me,
Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was
before what there, in the night,
By the sea, under the yellow and sagging moon,
The dusky demon aroused — the fire, the sweet hell
within,
The unknown want, the destiny of me.

31. O give me some clew!
O if I am to have so much, let me have more!
O a word! O what is my destination?
O I fear it is henceforth chaos!
O how joys, dreads, convolutions, human shapes, and
all shapes, spring as from graves around me!
O phantoms! you cover all the land, and all the sea!
O I cannot see in the dimness whether you smile or
frown upon me;
O vapor, a look, a word! O well-beloved!
O you dear women's and men's phantoms!

32. A word then, (for I will conquer it,)
The word final, superior to all,
Subtle, sent up — what is it? — I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea-waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

33. Answering, the sea,
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whispered me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
Lisped to me constantly the low and delicious word DEATH,
And again Death — ever Death, Death, Death,
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird, nor like my aroused child's heart,
But edging near, as privately for me, rustling at my feet,
And creeping thence steadily up to my ears,
Death, Death, Death, Death, Death.

34. Which I do not forget,
But fuse the song of two together,
That was sung to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
With the thousand responsive songs, at random,
My own songs, awaked from that hour,
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
The word of the sweetest song, and all songs,
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,
The sea whispered me.

LEAF OF FACES.

1. SAUNTERING the pavement, or riding the country by-road, here then are faces!

Faces of friendship, precision, caution, suavity, ideality,

The spiritual prescient face — the always welcome, common, benevolent face,

The face of the singing of music — the grand faces of natural lawyers and judges, broad at the back-top,

The faces of hunters and fishers, bulged at the brows — the shaved blanched faces of orthodox citizens,

The pure, extravagant, yearning, questioning artist's face,

The ugly face of some beautiful Soul, the handsome detested or despised face,

The sacred faces of infants, the illuminated face of the mother of many children,

The face of an amour, the face of veneration,

The face as of a dream, the face of an immobile rock,

The face withdrawn of its good and bad, a castrated face,

A wild hawk, his wings clipped by the clipper,

A stallion that yielded at last to the thongs and knife of the gelder.

2. Sauntering the pavement, or crossing the ceaseless ferry, here then are faces,
I see them and complain not, and am content with all.

3. Do you suppose I could be content with all, if I thought them their own finale?

4. This now is too lamentable a face for a man,
Some abject louse, asking leave to be — cringing for it,
Some milk-nosed maggot, blessing what lets it wrig to its hole.

5. This face is a dog's snout sniffling for garbage;
Snakes nest in that mouth — I hear the sibilant threat.

6. This face is a haze more chill than the arctic sea,
Its sleepy and wobbling icebergs crunch as they go.

7. This is a face of bitter herbs — this an emetic — they need no label,
And more of the drug-shelf, laudanum, caoutchouc, or hog's-lard.

8. This face is an epilepsy, its wordless tongue gives out the unearthly cry,
Its veins down the neck distend, its eyes roll till they show nothing but their whites,
Its teeth grit, the palms of the hands are cut by the turned-in nails,
The man falls struggling and foaming to the ground while he speculates well.

9. This face is bitten by vermin and worms,
And this is some murderer's knife with a half-pulled scabbard.

10. This face owes to the sexton his dismalest fee,
An unceasing death-bell tolls there.

11. Those then are really men — the bosses and tufts of the great round globe!

12. Features of my equals, would you trick me with your creased and cadaverous march?
Well, you cannot trick me.

13. I see your rounded never-erased flow,
I see neath the rims of your haggard and mean disguises.

14. Splay and twist as you like — poke with the tangling fores of fishes or rats,
You'll be unmuzzled, you certainly will.

15. I saw the face of the most smeared and slobbering idiot they had at the asylum,
And I knew for my consolation what they knew not,
And I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my brother,
The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen tenement,
And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,
And I shall meet the real landlord, perfect and unharmed, every inch as good as myself.

16. The Lord advances, and yet advances,
Always the shadow in front — always the reached hand bringing up the laggards.

17. Out of this face emerge banners and horses — O superb! I see what is coming,

I see the high pioneer-caps — I see the staves of runners clearing the way,
I hear victorious drums.

18. This face is a life-boat,
This is the face commanding and bearded, it asks no odds of the rest,
This face is flavored fruit, ready for eating,
This face of a healthy honest boy is the programme of all good.

19. These faces bear testimony slumbering or awake,
They show their descent from the Master himself.

20. Off the word I have spoken I except not one — red, white, black, are all deific,
In each house is the ovum — it comes forth after a thousand years.

21. Spots or cracks at the windows do not disturb me,
Tall and sufficient stand behind, and make signs to me,
I read the promise, and patiently wait.

22. This is a full-grown lily's face,
She speaks to the limber-hipp'd man near the garden pickets,
Come here, she blushingly cries — *Come nigh to me, limber-hipp'd man, and give me your finger and thumb,*
Stand at my side till I lean as high as I can upon you,
Fill me with albescent honey, bend down to me,
Rub to me with your chafing beard, rub to my breast and shoulders.

23. The old face of the mother of many children!
Whist! I am fully content.

24. Lulled and late is the smoke of the First Day morning,
It hangs low over the rows of trees by the fences,
It hangs thin by the sassafras, the wild-cherry, and the cat-brier under them.

25. I saw the rich ladies in full dress at the soiree,
I heard what the singers were singing so long,
Heard who sprang in crimson youth from the white froth and the water-blue.

26. Behold a woman!
She looks out from her quaker cap — her face is clearer and more beautiful than the sky.

27. She sits in an arm-chair, under the shaded porch of the farm-house,
The sun just shines on her old white head.

28. Her ample gown is of cream-hued linen,
Her grand-sons raised the flax, and her grand-daughters spun it with the distaff and the wheel.

29. The melodious character of the earth,
The finish beyond which philosophy cannot go, and does not wish to go,
The justified mother of men.

EUROPE,

The 72d and 73d Years of Theſe States.

1. SUDDENLY out of its stale and drowsy lair, the lair of slaves,
Like lightning it le'pt forth, half startled at itself,
Its feet upon the ashes and the rags — its hands tight to the throats of kings.

2. O hope and faith!
O aching close of exiled patriots' lives!
O many a sickened heart!
Turn back unto this day, and make yourselves afresh.

3. And you, paid to defile the People! you liars, mark!
Not for numberless agonies, murders, lusts,
For court thieving in its manifold mean forms, worming from his simplicity the poor man's wages,
For many a promise sworn by royal lips, and broken, and laughed at in the breaking,
Then in their power, not for all these did the blows strike revenge, or the heads of the nobles fall;
The People scorned the ferocity of kings.

4. But the sweetness of mercy brewed bitter destruction, and the frightened rulers come back,

Each comes in state with his train — hangman, priest, tax-gatherer,
Soldier, lawyer, lords, jailers, and sycophants.

5. Yet behind all, hovering, stealing — lo, a Shape,
Vague as the night, draped interminably, head front and form, in scarlet folds,
Whose face and eyes none may see,
Out of its robes only this — the red robes, lifted by the arm,
One finger crook'd, pointed high over the top, like the head of a snake appears.

6. Meanwhile, corpses lie in new-made graves — bloody corpses of young men;
The rope of the gibbet hangs heavily, the bullets of princes are flying, the creatures of power laugh aloud,
And all these things bear fruits — and they are good.

7. Those corpses of young men,
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets — those hearts pierced by the gray lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere with unslaughter'd vitality.

8. They live in other young men, O kings!
They live in brothers, again ready to defy you!
They were purified by death — they were taught and exalted.

9. Not a grave of the murdered for freedom, but grows seed for freedom, in its turn to bear seed,
Which the winds carry afar and re-sow, and the rains and the snows nourish.

10. Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of tyrants let loose,
But it stalks invisibly over the earth, whispering, counselling, cautioning.

11. Liberty! let others despair of you! I never despair of you.

12. Is the house shut? Is the master away?
Nevertheless be ready — be not weary of watching,
He will soon return — his messengers come anon.

THOUGHT.

Of Public Opinion,
Of a calm and cool fiat, sooner or later, (How impassive! How certain and final!)
Of the President with pale face asking secretly to himself, *What will the people say at last?*
Of the frivolous Judge — Of the corrupt Congressman, Governor, Mayor — Of such as these, standing helpless and exposed;
Of the mumbling and screaming priest — (soon, soon deserted;)
Of the lessening, year by year, of venerableness, and of the dicta of officers, statutes, pulpits, schools,
Of the rising forever taller and stronger and broader, of the intuitions of men and women, and of self-esteem, and of personality;
Of the New World — Of the Democracies, resplendent, en-masse,
Of the conformity of politics, armies, navies, to them and to me,
Of the shining sun by them — Of the inherent light, greater than the rest,
Of the envelopment of all by them, and of the effusion of all from them.

Enfans d' Adam.

1.

To the garden, the world, anew ascending,
Potent mates, daughters, sons, preluding,
The love, the life of their bodies, meaning and being,
Curious, here behold my resurrection, after slumber,
The revolving cycles, in their wide sweep, having brought me again,
Amorous, mature — all beautiful to me — all wondrous,
My limbs, and the quivering fire that ever plays through them, for reasons, most wondrous;
Existing, I peer and penetrate still,
Content with the present — content with the past,
By my side, or back of me, Eve following,
Or in front, and I following her just the same.

2.

FROM that of myself, without which I were nothing,
From what I am determined to make illustrious, even if I stand sole among men,
From my own voice resonant — singing the phallus,
Singing the song of procreation,
Singing the need of superb children, and therein superb grown people,
Singing the muscular urge and the blending,
Singing the bedfellow's song, (O resistless yearning!
O for any and each, the body correlative attracting!
O for you, whoever you are, your correlative body! O it, more than all else, you delighting!)
From the pent up rivers of myself,
From the hungry gnaw that eats me night and day,
From native moments — from bashful pains — singing them,
Singing something yet unfound, though I have diligently sought it, ten thousand years,
Singing the true song of the Soul, fitful, at random,
Singing what, to the Soul, entirely redeemed her, the faithful one, the prostitute, who detained me when I went to the city,
Singing the song of prostitutes;
Renascent with grossest Nature, or among animals,
Of that — of them, and what goes with them, my poems informing,
Of the smell of apples and lemons — of the pairing of birds,
Of the wet of woods — of the lapping of waves,

Of the mad pushes of waves upon the land — I them chanting,
The overture lightly sounding — the strain anticipating,
The welcome nearness — the sight of the perfect body,
The swimmer swimming naked in the bath, or motionless on his back lying and floating,
The female form approaching — I, pensive, love-flesh tremulous, aching;
The slave's body for sale — I, sternly, with harsh voice, auctioneering,
The divine list, for myself or you, or for any one, making,
The face — the limbs — the index from head to foot, and what it arouses,
The mystic deliria — the madness amorous — the utter abandonment,
(Hark, close and still, what I now whisper to you,
I love you — O you entirely possess me,
O I wish that you and I escape from the rest, and go utterly off — O free and lawless,
Two hawks in the air — two fishes swimming in the sea not more lawless than we;)
The furious storm through me careering — I passionately trembling,
The oath of the inseparableness of two together — of the woman that loves me, and whom I love more than my life — That oath swearing,
(O I willingly stake all, for you!
O let me be lost, if it must be so!
O you and I — what is it to us what the rest do or think?

What is all else to us? only that we enjoy each other,
and exhaust each other, if it must be so;)
From the master — the pilot I yield the vessel to,
The general commanding me, commanding all — from
him permission taking,
From time the programme hastening, (I have loitered
too long, as it is;)
From sex — From the warp and from the woof,
(To talk to the perfect girl who understands me — the
girl of The States,
To waft to her these from my own lips — to effuse
them from my own body;)
From privacy — From frequent repinings alone,
From plenty of persons near, and yet the right person
not near,
From the soft sliding of hands over me, and thrusting
of fingers through my hair and beard,
From the long-sustained kiss upon the mouth or
bosom,
From the close pressure that makes me or any man
drunk, fainting with excess,
From what the divine husband knows — from the
work of fatherhood,
From exultation, victory, and relief — from the bed-
fellow's embrace in the night,
From the act-poems of eyes, hands, hips, and bosoms,
From the cling of the trembling arm,
From the bending curve and the clinch,
From side by side, the pliant coverlid off throwing,
From the one so unwilling to have me leave — and
me just as unwilling to leave,
(Yet a moment, O tender waiter, and I return,)
From the hour of shining stars and dropping dews,

From the night, a moment, I, emerging, flitting out,
Celebrate you, enfans prepared for,
And you, stalwart loins.

3.

1. O MY children! O mates!
O the bodies of you, and of all men and women, engirth me, and I engirth them,
O they will not let me off, nor I them, till I go with them, respond to them,
And respond to the contact of them, and discorrupt them, and charge them with the charge of the Soul.

2. Was it doubted if those who corrupt their own bodies conceal themselves?
And if those who defile the living are as bad as they who defile the dead?
And if the body does not do as much as the Soul?
And if the body were not the Soul, what is the Soul?

3. The love of the body of man or woman balks account — the body itself balks account,
That of the male is perfect, and that of the female is perfect.

4. The expression of the face balks account,
But the expression of a well made man appears not only in his face,

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

It is in his limbs and joints also, it is curiously in the joints of his hips and wrists,
It is in his walk, the carriage of his neck, the flex of his waist and knees — dress does not hide him,
The strong, sweet, supple quality he has, strikes through the cotton and flannel,
To see him pass conveys as much as the best poem, perhaps more,
You linger to see his back, and the back of his neck and shoulder-side.

5. The sprawl and fulness of babes, the bosoms and heads of women, the folds of their dress, their style as we pass in the street, the contour of their shape downwards,
The swimmer naked in the swimming bath, seen as he swims through the transparent green-shine, or lies with his face up, and rolls silently to and fro in the heave of the water,
The bending forward and backward of rowers in row-boats — the horseman in his saddle,
Girls, mothers, house-keepers, in all their performances,
The group of laborers seated at noon-time with their open dinner-kettles, and their wives waiting,
The female soothing a child — the farmer's daughter in the garden or cow-yard,
The young fellow hoeing corn — the sleigh-driver guiding his six horses through the crowd,
The wrestle of wrestlers, two apprentice-boys, quite grown, lusty, good-natured, native-born, out on the vacant lot at sun-down, after work,

The coats and caps thrown down, the embrace of love and resistance,
The upper-hold and under-hold, the hair rumpled over and blinding the eyes;
The march of firemen in their own costumes, the play of masculine muscle through clean-setting trousers and waist-straps,
The slow return from the fire, the pause when the bell strikes suddenly again, and the listening on the alert,
The natural, perfect, varied attitudes — the bent head, the curved neck, and the counting,
Such-like I love — I loosen myself, pass freely, am at the mother's breast with the little child,
Swim with the swimmers, wrestle with wrestlers, march in line with the firemen, and pause, listen, and count.

6. I knew a man,
He was a common farmer — he was the father of five sons,
And in them were the fathers of sons — and in them were the fathers of sons.

7. This man was of wonderful vigor, calmness, beauty of person,
The shape of his head, the richness and breadth of his manners, the pale yellow and white of his hair and beard, and the immeasurable meaning of his black eyes,
These I used to go and visit him to see — he was wise also,

He was six feet tall, he was over eighty years old — his sons were massive, clean, bearded, tan-faced, handsome,
They and his daughters loved him — all who saw him loved him,
They did not love him by allowance — they loved him with personal love;
He drank water only — the blood showed like scarlet through the clear-brown skin of his face,
He was a frequent gunner and fisher — he sailed his boat himself — he had a fine one presented to him by a ship-joiner — he had fowling-pieces, presented to him by men that loved him;
When he went with his five sons and many grandsons to hunt or fish, you would pick him out as the most beautiful and vigorous of the gang,
You would wish long and long to be with him — you would wish to sit by him in the boat, that you and he might touch each other.

8. I have perceived that to be with those I like is enough,
To stop in company with the rest at evening is enough,
To be surrounded by beautiful, curious, breathing, laughing flesh is enough,
To pass among them, or touch any one, or rest my arm ever so lightly round his or her neck for a moment — what is this, then?
I do not ask any more delight — I swim in it, as in a sea.

9. There is something in staying close to men and women, and looking on them, and in the contact and odor of them, that pleases the Soul well,
All things please the Soul — but these please the Soul well.

10. This is the female form,
A divine nimbus exhales from it from head to foot,
It attracts with fierce undeniable attraction,
I am drawn by its breath as if I were no more than a helpless vapor — all falls aside but myself and it,
Books, art, religion, time, the visible and solid earth, the atmosphere and the clouds, and what was expected of heaven or feared of hell, are now consumed,
Mad filaments, ungovernable shoots play out of it, the response likewise ungovernable,
Hair, bosom, hips, bend of legs, negligent falling hands, all diffused — mine too diffused,
Ebb stung by the flow, and flow stung by the ebb — love-flesh swelling and deliciously aching,
Limitless limpid jets of love hot and enormous, quivering jelly of love, white-blow and delirious juice,
Bridegroom-night of love, working surely and softly into the prostrate dawn,
Undulating into the willing and yielding day,
Lost in the cleave of the clasping and sweet-fleshed day.

11. This is the nucleus — after the child is born of woman, the man is born of woman,

This is the bath of birth — this is the merge of small and large, and the outlet again.

12. Be not ashamed, women — your privilege encloses the rest, and is the exit of the rest,
You are the gates of the body, and you are the gates of the Soul.

13. The female contains all qualities, and tempers them — she is in her place, and moves with perfect balance,
She is all things duly veiled — she is both passive and active,
She is to conceive daughters as well as sons, and sons as well as daughters.

14. As I see my Soul reflected in nature,
As I see through a mist, one with inexpressible completeness and beauty,
See the bent head and arms folded over the breast — the female I see.

15. The male is not less the Soul, nor more — he too is in his place,
He too is all qualities — he is action and power,
The flush of the known universe is in him,
Scorn becomes him well, and appetite and defiance become him well,
The wildest largest passions, bliss that is utmost, sorrow that is utmost, become him well — pride is for him,
The full-spread pride of man is calming and excellent to the Soul;

Knowledge becomes him — he likes it always — he brings everything to the test of himself,
Whatever the survey, whatever the sea and the sail, he strikes soundings at last only here,
Where else does he strike soundings, except here?

16. The man's body is sacred, and the woman's body is sacred,
No matter who it is, it is sacred;
Is it a slave? Is it one of the dull-faced immigrants just landed on the wharf?
Each belongs here or anywhere just as much as the well-off — just as much as you,
Each has his or her place in the procession.

17. All is a procession,
The universe is a procession, with measured and beautiful motion.

18. Do you know so much yourself, that you call the slave or the dull-face ignorant?
Do you suppose you have a right to a good sight, and he or she has no right to a sight?
Do you think matter has cohered together from its diffused float — and the soil is on the surface, and water runs, and vegetation sprouts,
For you only, and not for him and her?

19. A man's body at auction!
I help the auctioneer — the sloven does not half know his business.

20. Gentlemen, look on this wonder!
Whatever the bids of the bidders, they cannot be high enough for it,

For it the globe lay preparing quintillions of years, without one animal or plant,
For it the revolving cycles truly and steadily rolled.

21. In this head the all-baffling brain,
In it and below it, the making of the attributes of heroes.

22. Examine these limbs, red, black, or white — they are so cunning in tendon and nerve,
They shall be stript, that you may see them.

23. Exquisite senses, life-lit eyes, pluck, volition,
Flakes of breast-muscle, pliant back-bone and neck, flesh not flabby, good-sized arms and legs,
And wonders within there yet.

24. Within there runs blood,
The same old blood!
The same red-running blood!
There swells and jets a heart — there all passions, desires, reachings, aspirations,
Do you think they are not there because they are not expressed in parlors and lecture-rooms?

25. This is not only one man — this is the father of those who shall be fathers in their turns,
In him the start of populous states and rich republics,
Of him countless immortal lives, with countless embodiments and enjoyments.

26. How do you know who shall come from the offspring of his offspring through the centuries?

Who might you find you have come from yourself, if you could trace back through the centuries?

27. A woman's body at auction!
She too is not only herself — she is the teeming mother of mothers,
She is the bearer of them that shall grow and be mates to the mothers.

28. Her daughters, or their daughters' daughters — who knows who shall mate with them?
Who knows through the centuries what heroes may come from them?

29. In them, and of them, natal love — in them that divine mystery, the same old beautiful mystery.

30. Have you ever loved the body of a woman?
Have you ever loved the body of a man?
Your father — where is your father?
Your mother — is she living? have you been much with her? and has she been much with you?
Do you not see that these are exactly the same to all, in all nations and times, all over the earth?

31. If any thing is sacred, the human body is sacred,
And the glory and sweet of a man, is the token of manhood untainted,
And in man or woman, a clean, strong, firm-fibred body, is beautiful as the most beautiful face.

32. Have you seen the fool that corrupted his own live body? or the fool that corrupted her own live body?

For they do not conceal themselves, and cannot conceal themselves.

33. O my body! I dare not desert the likes of you in other men and women, nor the likes of the parts of you;
I believe the likes of you are to stand or fall with the likes of the Soul, (and that they are the Soul,)
I believe the likes of you shall stand or fall with my poems — and that they are poems,
Man's, woman's, child's, youth's, wife's, husband's, mother's, father's, young man's, young woman's poems,
Head, neck, hair, ears, drop and tympan of the ears,
Eyes, eye-fringes, iris of the eye, eye-brows, and the waking or sleeping of the lids,
Mouth, tongue, lips, teeth, roof of the mouth, jaws, and the jaw-hinges,
Nose, nostrils of the nose, and the partition,
Cheeks, temples, forehead, chin, throat, back of the neck, neck-slue,
Strong shoulders, manly beard, scapula, hind-shoulders, and the ample side-round of the chest,
Upper-arm, arm-pit, elbow-socket, lower-arm, arm-sinews, arm-bones,
Wrist and wrist-joints, hand, palm, knuckles, thumb, fore-finger, finger-balls, finger-joints, finger-nails,
Broad breast-front, curling hair of the breast, breast-bone, breast-side,
Ribs, belly, back-bone, joints of the back-bone,
Hips, hip-sockets, hip-strength, inward and outward round, man-balls, man-root,
Strong set of thighs, well carrying the trunk above,

Leg-fibres, knee, knee-pan, upper-leg, under-leg,
Ankles, instep, foot-ball, toes, toe-joints, the heel,
All attitudes, all the shapeliness, all the belongings of my or your body, or of any one's body, male or female,
The lung-sponges, the stomach-sac, the bowels sweet and clean,
The brain in its folds inside the skull-frame,
Sympathies, heart-valves, palate-valves, sexuality, maternity,
Womanhood, and all that is a woman — and the man that comes from woman,
The womb, the teats, nipples, breast-milk, tears, laughter, weeping, love-looks, love-perturbations and risings,
The voice, articulation, language, whispering, shouting aloud,
Food, drink, pulse, digestion, sweat, sleep, walking, swimming,
Poise on the hips, leaping, reclining, embracing, arm-curving, and tightening,
The continual changes of the flex of the mouth, and around the eyes,
The skin, the sun-burnt shade, freckles, hair,
The curious sympathy one feels, when feeling with the hand the naked meat of his own body, or another person's body,
The circling rivers, the breath, and breathing it in and out,
The beauty of the waist, and thence of the hips, and thence downward toward the knees,
The thin red jellies within you, or within me — the bones, and the marrow in the bones,

The exquisite realization of health,
O I say now these are not the parts and poems of the body only, but of the Soul,
O I say these are the Soul!

4.

1. A WOMAN waits for me — she contains all, nothing is lacking,
Yet all were lacking, if sex were lacking, or if the moisture of the right man were lacking.

2. Sex contains all,
Bodies, Souls, meanings, proofs, purities, delicacies, results, promulgations,
Songs, commands, health, pride, the maternal mystery, the semitic milk,
All hopes, benefactions, bestowals,
All the passions, loves, beauties, delights of the earth,
All the governments, judges, gods, followed persons of the earth,
These are contained in sex, as parts of itself, and justifications of itself.

3. Without shame the man I like knows and avows the deliciousness of his sex,
Without shame the woman I like knows and avows hers.

4. O I will fetch bully breeds of children yet!
I will dismiss myself from impassive women,
I will go stay with her who waits for me, and with those women that are warm-blooded and sufficient for me;
I see that they understand me, and do not deny me,
I see that they are worthy of me—I will be the robust husband of those women.

5. They are not one jot less than I am,
They are tanned in the face by shining suns and blowing winds,
Their flesh has the old divine suppleness and strength,
They know how to swim, row, ride, wrestle, shoot, run, strike, retreat, advance, resist, defend themselves,
They are ultimate in their own right—they are calm, clear, well-possessed of themselves.

6. I draw you close to me, you women!
I cannot let you go, I would do you good,
I am for you, and you are for me, not only for our own sake, but for others' sakes;
Enveloped in you sleep greater heroes and bards,
They refuse to awake at the touch of any man but me.

7. It is I, you women—I make my way,
I am stern, acrid, large, undissuadable—but I love you,
I do not hurt you any more than is necessary for you,
I pour the stuff to start sons and daughters fit for These States—I press with slow rude muscle,
I brace myself effectually—I listen to no entreaties,

I dare not withdraw till I deposit what has so long accumulated within me.

8. Through you I drain the pent-up rivers of myself,
In you I wrap a thousand onward years,
On you I graft the grafts of the best-beloved of me and of America,
The drops I distil upon you shall grow fierce and athletic girls, new artists, musicians, and singers,
The babes I beget upon you are to beget babes in their turn,
I shall demand perfect men and women out of my love-spendings,
I shall expect them to interpenetrate with others, as I and you interpenetrate now,
I shall count on the fruits of the gushing showers of them, as I count on the fruits of the gushing showers I give now,
I shall look for loving crops from the birth, life, death, immortality, I plant so lovingly now.

5.

SPONTANEOUS me, Nature,
The loving day, the friend I am happy with,
The arm of my friend hanging idly over my shoulder,
The hill-side whitened with blossoms of the mountain ash,
The same, late in autumn — the gorgeous hues of red, yellow, drab, purple, and light and dark green,

The rich coverlid of the grass — animals and birds — the private untrimmed bank — the primitive apples — the pebble-stones,
Beautiful dripping fragments — the negligent list of one after another, as I happen to call them to me, or think of them,
The real poems, (what we call poems being merely pictures,)
The poems of the privacy of the night, and of men like me,
This poem, drooping shy and unseen, that I always carry, and that all men carry,
(Know, once for all, avowed on purpose, wherever are men like me, are our lusty, lurking, masculine, poems,)
Love-thoughts, love-juice, love-odor, love-yielding, love-climbers, and the climbing sap,
Arms and hands of love — lips of love — phallic thumb of love — breasts of love — bellies pressed and glued together with love,
Earth of chaste love — life that is only life after love,
The body of my love — the body of the woman I love — the body of the man — the body of the earth,
Soft forenoon airs that blow from the south-west,
The hairy wild-bee that murmurs and hankers up and down — that gripes the full-grown lady-flower, curves upon her with amorous firm legs, takes his will of her, and holds himself tremulous and tight upon her till he is satisfied,
The wet of woods through the early hours,

Two sleepers at night lying close together as they sleep,
one with an arm slanting down across and below
the waist of the other,
The smell of apples, aromas from crushed sage-plant,
mint, birch-bark,
The boy's longings, the glow and pressure as he con-
fides to me what he was dreaming,
The dead leaf whirling its spiral whirl, and falling still
and content to the ground,
The no-formed stings that sights, people, objects, sting
me with,
The hubbed sting of myself, stinging me as much as it
ever can any one,
The sensitive, orbic, underlapped brothers, that only
privileged feelers may be intimate where they
are,
The curious roamer, the hand, roaming all over the
body — the bashful withdrawing of flesh where
the fingers soothingly pause and edge themselves,
The limpid liquid within the young man,
The vexed corrosion, so pensive and so painful,
The torment — the irritable tide that will not be at
rest,
The like of the same I feel — the like of the same in
others,
The young woman that flushes and flushes, and the
young man that flushes and flushes,
The young man that wakes, deep at night, the hot
hand seeking to repress what would master him
— the strange half-welcome pangs, visions, sweats,
The pulse pounding through palms and trembling
encircling fingers — the young man all colored,
red, ashamed, angry;

The souse upon me of my lover the sea, as I lie willing
and naked,
The merriment of the twin-babes that crawl over the
grass in the sun, the mother never turning her
vigilant eyes from them,
The walnut-trunk, the walnut-husks, and the ripening
or ripened long-round walnuts,
The continence of vegetables, birds, animals,
The consequent meanness of me should I skulk or find
myself indecent, while birds and animals never
once skulk or find themselves indecent,
The great chastity of paternity, to match the great
chastity of maternity,
The oath of procreation I have sworn — my Adamic
and fresh daughters,
The greed that eats me day and night with hungry
gnaw, till I saturate what shall produce boys to
fill my place when I am through,
The wholesome relief, repose, content,
And this bunch plucked at random from myself,
It has done its work — I toss it carelessly to fall
where it may.

6.

1. O FURIOUS! O confine me not!
(What is this that frees me so in storms?
What do my shouts amid lightnings and raging winds
mean?)

2. O to drink the mystic deliria deeper than any other man!
O savage and tender achings!
(I bequeath them to you, my children,
I tell them to you, for reasons, O bridegroom and bride.)

3. O to be yielded to you, whoever you are, and you to be yielded me, in defiance of the world!
(Know, I am a man, attracting, at any time, her I but look upon, or touch with the tips of my fingers,
Or that touches my face, or leans against me.)

4. O to return to Paradise!
O to draw you to me — to plant on you, for the first time, the lips of a determined man!
O rich and feminine! O to show you to realize the blood of life for yourself, whoever you are — and no matter when and where you live.

5. O the puzzle — the thrice-tied knot — the deep and dark pool! O all untied and illumined!
O to speed where there is space enough and air enough at last!
O to be absolved from previous follies and degradations — I from mine, and you from yours!
O to find a new unthought-of nonchalance with the best of nature!
O to have the gag removed from one's mouth!
O to have the feeling, to-day or any day, I am sufficient as I am!

6. O something unproved! something in a trance!
O madness amorous! O trembling!

O to escape utterly from others' anchors and holds!
To drive free! to love free! to dash reckless and dangerous!
To court destruction with taunts — with invitations!
To ascend — to leap to the heavens of the love indicated to me!
To rise thither with my inebriate Soul!
To be lost, if it must be so!
To feed the remainder of life with one hour of fulness and freedom!
With one brief hour of madness and joy.

7.

You and I — what the earth is, we are,
We two — how long we were fooled!
Now delicious, transmuted, swiftly we escape, as Nature escapes,
We are Nature — long have we been absent, but now we return,
We become plants, leaves, foliage, roots, bark,
We are bedded in the ground — we are rocks,
We are oaks — we grow in the openings side by side,
We browse — we are two among the wild herds, spontaneous as any,
We are two fishes swimming in the sea together,
We are what the locust blossoms are — we drop scent around the lanes, mornings and evenings,
We are also the coarse smut of beasts, vegetables, minerals,

We are what the flowing wet of the Tennessee is — we are two peaks of the Blue Mountains, rising up in Virginia,
We are two predatory hawks — we soar above and look down,
We are two resplendent suns — we it is who balance ourselves orbic and stellar — we are as two comets;
We prowl fanged and four-footed in the woods — we spring on prey;
We are two clouds, forenoons and afternoons, driving overhead,
We are seas mingling — we are two of those cheerful waves, rolling over each other, and interwetting each other,
We are what the atmosphere is, transparent, receptive, pervious, impervious,
We are snow, rain, cold, darkness — we are each product and influence of the globe,
We have circled and circled till we have arrived home again — we two have,
We have voided all but freedom, and all but our own joy.

8.

NATIVE moments! when you come upon me — Ah you are here now!
Give me now libidinous joys only!
Give me the drench of my passions! Give me life coarse and rank!
To-day, I go consort with nature's darlings — to-night too,

I am for those who believe in loose delights — I share
the midnight orgies of young men,
I dance with the dancers, and drink with the drink-
ers,
The echoes ring with our indecent calls,
I take for my love some prostitute — I pick out some
low person for my dearest friend,
He shall be lawless, rude, illiterate — he shall be one
condemned by others for deeds done;
I will play a part no longer — Why should I exile
myself from my companions?
O you shunned persons! I at least do not shun you,
I come forthwith in your midst — I will be your poet,
I will be more to you than to any of the rest.

9.

ONCE I passed through a populous city, imprinting
my brain, for future use, with its shows, architec-
ture, customs, and traditions;
Yet now, of all that city, I remember only a woman
I casually met there, who detained me for love
of me,
Day by day and night by night we were together, —
All else has long been forgotten by me,
I remember I say only that woman who passionately
clung to me,
Again we wander — we love — we separate again,
Again she holds me by the hand — I must not go!
I see her close beside me, with silent lips, sad and
tremulous.

10.

INQUIRING, tireless, seeking that yet unfound,
I, a child, very old, over waves, toward the house of maternity, the land of migrations, look afar,
Look off the shores of my Western Sea — having arrived at last where I am — the circle almost circled;
For coming westward from Hindustan, from the vales of Kashmere,
From Asia — from the north — from the God, the sage, and the hero,
From the south — from the flowery peninsulas, and the spice islands,
Now I face the old home again — looking over to it, joyous, as after long travel, growth, and sleep;
But where is what I started for, so long ago?
And why is it yet unfound?

11.

IN the new garden, in all the parts,
In cities now, modern, I wander,
Though the second or third result, or still further, primitive yet,
Days, places, indifferent — though various, the same,
Time, Paradise, the Mannahatta, the prairies, finding me unchanged,
Death indifferent — Is it that I lived long since? Was I buried very long ago?

For all that, I may now be watching you here, this moment;
For the future, with determined will, I seek — the woman of the future,
You, born years, centuries after me, I seek.

12.

AGES and ages, returning at intervals,
Undestroyed, wandering immortal,
Lusty, phallic, with the potent original loins, perfectly sweet,
I, chanter of Adamic songs,
Through the new garden, the West, the great cities, calling,
Deliriate, thus prelude what is generated, offering these, offering myself,
Bathing myself, bathing my songs in sex,
Offspring of my loins.

13.

O HYMEN! O hymenee!
Why do you tantalize me thus?
O why sting me for a swift moment only?
Why can you not continue? O why do you now cease?
Is it because, if you continued beyond the swift moment, you would soon certainly kill me?

14.

I AM he that aches with love;
Does the earth gravitate? Does not all matter, aching, attract all matter?
So the body of me to all I meet, or that I know.

15.

EARLY in the morning,
Walking forth from the bower, refreshed with sleep,
Behold me where I pass — hear my voice — approach,
Touch me — touch the palm of your hand to my body as I pass,
Be not afraid of my body.

POEM OF THE ROAD.

1. Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me, leading wherever I choose.

2. Henceforth I ask not good-fortune — I am good-fortune,
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
Strong and content, I travel the open road.

3. The earth — that is sufficient,
I do not want the constellations any nearer,
I know they are very well where they are,
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

4. Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
I carry them, men and women — I carry them with me wherever I go,
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
I am filled with them, and I will fill them in return.

5. You road I travel and look around! I believe you are not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.

6. Here is the profound lesson of reception, neither preference or denial,
The black with his woolly head, the felon, the diseased, the illiterate person, are not denied;
The birth, the hasting after the physician, the beggar's tramp, the drunkard's stagger, the laughing party of mechanics,
The escaped youth, the rich person's carriage, the fop, the eloping couple,
The early market-man, the hearse, the moving of furniture into the town, the return back from the town,
They pass, I also pass, any thing passes — none can be interdicted,
None but are accepted, none but are dear to me.

7. You air that serves me with breath to speak!
You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and give them shape!
You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable showers!
You animals moving serenely over the earth!
You birds that wing yourselves through the air! you insects!
You sprouting growths from the farmers' fields! you stalks and weeds by the fences!
You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides!
I think you are latent with curious existences — you are so dear to me.

8. You flagged walks of the cities! you strong curbs at the edges!

You ferries! you planks and posts of wharves! you timber-lined sides! you distant ships!
You rows of houses! you window-pierced façades! you roofs!
You porches and entrances! you copings and iron guards!
You windows whose transparent shells might expose so much!
You doors and ascending steps! you arches!
You gray stones of interminable pavements! you trodden crossings!
From all that has been near you I believe you have imparted to yourselves, and now would impart the same secretly to me,
From the living and the dead I think you have peopled your impassive surfaces, and the spirits thereof would be evident and amicable with me.

9. The earth expanding right hand and left hand,
The picture alive, every part in its best light,
The music falling in where it is wanted, and stopping where it was not wanted,
The cheerful voice of the public road — the gay fresh sentiment of the road.

10. O highway I travel! O public road! do you say to me, Do not leave me?
Do you say, Venture not? If you leave me, you are lost?
Do you say, I am already prepared — I am well-beaten and undenied — adhere to me?

11. O public road! I say back, I am not afraid to leave you — yet I love you,

You express me better than I can express myself,
You shall be more to me than my poem.

12. I think heroic deeds were all conceived in the open air,
I think I could stop here myself, and do miracles,
I think whatever I meet on the road I shall like, and whoever beholds me shall like me,
I think whoever I see must be happy.

13. From this hour, freedom!
From this hour I ordain myself loosed of limits and imaginary lines,
Going where I list — my own master, total and absolute,
Listening to others, and considering well what they say,
Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that would hold me.

14. I inhale great draughts of air,
The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

15. I am larger than I thought,
I did not know I held so much goodness.

16. All seems beautiful to me,
I can repeat over to men and women, You have done such good to me, I would do the same to you.

17. I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,

I will toss the new gladness and roughness among them;
Whoever denies me, it shall not trouble me,
Whoever accepts me, he or she shall be blessed, and shall bless me.

18. Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear, it would not amaze me,
Now if a thousand beautiful forms of women appeared, it would not astonish me.

19. Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the earth.

20. Here is space — here a great personal deed has room,
A great deed seizes upon the hearts of the whole race of men,
Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law, and mocks all authority and all argument against it.

21. Here is the test of wisdom,
Wisdom is not finally tested in schools,
Wisdom cannot be passed from one having it, to another not having it,
Wisdom is of the Soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own proof,
Applies to all stages and objects and qualities, and is content,
Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and the excellence of things;
Something there is in the float of the sight of things that provokes it out of the Soul.

22. Now I reëxamine philosophies and religions,
They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all under the spacious clouds, and along the landscape and flowing currents.

23. Here is realization,
Here is a man tallied — he realizes here what he has in him,
The animals, the past, the future, light, space, majesty, love, if they are vacant of you, you are vacant of them.

24. Only the kernel of every object nourishes;
Where is he who tears off the husks for you and me?
Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you and me?

25. Here is adhesiveness — it is not previously fashioned — it is apropos;
Do you know what it is, as you pass, to be loved by strangers?
Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls?

26. Here is the efflux of the Soul,
The efflux of the Soul comes through beautiful gates of laws, provoking questions;
These yearnings, why are they? These thoughts in the darkness, why are they?
Why are there men and women that while they are nigh me, the sun-light expands my blood?
Why, when they leave me, do my pennants of joy sink flat and lank?
Why are there trees I never walk under, but large and melodious thoughts descend upon me?

(I think they hang there winter and summer on those trees, and always drop fruit as I pass;)
What is it I interchange so suddenly with strangers?
What with some driver, as I ride on the seat by his side?
What with some fisherman, drawing his seine by the shore, as I walk by and pause?
What gives me to be free to a woman's or man's good-will? What gives them to be free to mine?

27. The efflux of the Soul is happiness — here is happiness,
I think it pervades the air, waiting at all times,
Now it flows into us — we are rightly charged.

28. Here rises the fluid and attaching character;
The fluid and attaching character is the freshness and sweetness of man and woman,
The herbs of the morning sprout no fresher and sweeter every day out of the roots of themselves, than it sprouts fresh and sweet continually out of itself.

29. Toward the fluid and attaching character exudes the sweat of the love of young and old,
From it falls distilled the charm that mocks beauty and attainments,
Toward it heaves the shuddering longing ache of contact.

30. Allons! Whoever you are, come travel with me!
Travelling with me, you find what never tires.

31. The earth never tires,
The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first —
Nature is rude and incomprehensible at first;
Be not discouraged — keep on — there are divine things, well enveloped,
I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than words can tell.

32. Allons! We must not stop here!
However sweet these laid-up stores — however convenient this dwelling, we cannot remain here,
However sheltered this port, and however calm these waters, we must not anchor here,
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us, we are permitted to receive it but a little while.

33. Allons! The inducements shall be great to you;
We will sail pathless and wild seas,
We will go where winds blow, waves dash, and the Yankee clipper speeds by under full sail.

34. Allons! With power, liberty, the earth, the elements!
Health, defiance, gayety, self-esteem, curiosity;
Allons! from all formules!
From your formules, O bat-eyed and materialistic priests!

35. The stale cadaver blocks up the passage — the burial waits no longer.

36. Allons! Yet take warning!
He travelling with me needs the best blood, thews, endurance,

None may come to the trial, till he or she bring courage and health.

37. Come not here if you have already spent the best of yourself;
Only those may come, who come in sweet and determined bodies,
No diseased person — no rum-drinker or venereal taint is permitted here.

38. I and mine do not convince by arguments, similes, rhymes,
We convince by our presence.

39. Listen! I will be honest with you,
I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes,
These are the days that must happen to you:

40. You shall not heap up what is called riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve,
You but arrive at the city to which you were destined — you hardly settle yourself to satisfaction, before you are called by an irresistible call to depart,
You shall be treated to the ironical smiles and mockings of those who remain behind you,
What beckonings of love you receive, you shall only answer with passionate kisses of parting,
You shall not allow the hold of those who spread their reached hands toward you.

41. Allons! After the GREAT COMPANIONS! and to belong to them!

They too are on the road! they are the swift and majestic men! they are the greatest women.

42. Over that which hindered them — over that which retarded — passing impediments large or small,
Committers of crimes, committers of many beautiful virtues,
Enjoyers of calms of seas, and storms of seas,
Sailors of many a ship, walkers of many a mile of land,
Habitues of many different countries, habitues of far-distant dwellings,
Trusters of men and women, observers of cities, solitary toilers,
Pausers and contemplaters of tufts, blossoms, shells of the shore,
Dancers at wedding-dances, kissers of brides, tender helpers of children, bearers of children,
Soldiers of revolts, standers by gaping graves, lowerers down of coffins,
Journeyers over consecutive seasons, over the years — the curious years, each emerging from that which preceded it,
Journeyers as with companions, namely, their own diverse phases,
Forth-steppers from the latent unrealized baby-days,
Journeyers gayly with their own youth — journeyers with their bearded and well-grained manhood,
Journeyers with their womanhood, ample, unsurpassed, content,
Journeyers with their sublime old age of manhood or womanhood,
Old age, calm, expanded, broad with the haughty breadth of the universe,

Old age, flowing free with the delicious near-by freedom of death.

43. Allons! To that which is endless, as it was beginningless,
To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights,
To merge all in the travel they tend to, and the days and nights they tend to,
Again to merge them in the start of superior journeys;
To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and pass it,
To conceive no time, however distant, but what you may reach it and pass it,
To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for you — however long, but it stretches and waits for you;
To see no being, not God's or any, but you also go thither,
To see no possession but you may possess it — enjoying all without labor or purchase — abstracting the feast, yet not abstracting one particle of it;
To take the best of the farmer's farm and the rich man's elegant villa, and the chaste blessings of the well-married couple, and the fruits of orchards and flowers of gardens,
To take to your use out of the compact cities as you pass through,
To carry buildings and streets with you afterward wherever you go,
To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you encounter them — to gather the love out of their hearts,

To take your own lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you,
To know the universe itself as a road — as many roads — as roads for travelling Souls.

44. The Soul travels,
The body does not travel as much as the Soul,
The body has just as great a work as the Soul, and parts away at last for the journeys of the Soul.

45. All parts away for the progress of Souls,
All religion, all solid things, arts, governments — all that was or is apparent upon this globe or any globe, falls into niches and corners before the procession of Souls along the grand roads of the universe.

46. Of the progress of the Souls of men and women along the grand roads of the universe, all other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.

47. Forever alive, forever forward,
Stately, solemn, sad, withdrawn, baffled, mad, turbulent, feeble, dissatisfied,
Desperate, proud, fond, sick, accepted by men, rejected by men,
They go! they go! I know that they go, but I know not where they go,
But I know that they go toward the best — toward something great.

48. Allons! Whoever you are! come forth!
You must not stay sleeping and dallying there in the house, though you built it, or though it has been built for you.

49. Allons! out of the dark confinement!
It is useless to protest — I know all, and expose it.

50. Behold, through you as bad as the rest,
Through the laughter, dancing, dining, supping, of people,
Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those washed and trimmed faces,
Behold a secret silent loathing and despair.

51. No husband, no wife, no friend, no lover, so trusted as to hear the confession,
Another self, a duplicate of every one, skulking and hiding it goes, open and above board it goes,
Formless and wordless through the streets of the cities, polite and bland in the parlors,
In the cars of rail-roads, in steam-boats, in the public assembly,
Home to the houses of men and women, among their families, at the table, in the bed-room, everywhere,
Smartly attired, countenance smiling, form upright, death under the breast-bones, hell under the skull-bones,
Under the broadcloth and gloves, under the ribbons and artificial flowers,
Keeping fair with the customs, speaking not a syllable of itself,
Speaking of anything else, but never of itself.

52. Allons! Through struggles and wars!
The goal that was named cannot be countermanded.

53. Have the past struggles succeeded?
What has succeeded? Yourself? Your nation? Nature?
Now understand me well — It is provided in the essence of things, that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary.

54. My call is the call of battle — I nourish active rebellion,
He going with me must go well armed,
He going with me goes often with spare diet, poverty, angry enemies, desertions.

55. Allons! The road is before us!
It is safe — I have tried it — my own feet have tried it well.

56. Allons! Be not detained!
Let the paper remain on the desk unwritten, and the book on the shelf unopened!
Let the tools remain in the workshop! let the money remain unearned!
Let the school stand! mind not the cry of the teacher!
Let the preacher preach in his pulpit! let the lawyer plead in the court, and the judge expound the law.

57. Mon enfant! I give you my hand!
I give you my love, more precious than money,
I give you myself, before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself? Will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

TO THE SAYERS OF WORDS.

1. Earth, round, rolling, compact — suns, moons, animals — all these are words to be said,
Watery, vegetable, sauroid advances — beings, premonitions, lispings of the future,
Behold! these are vast words to be said.

2. Were you thinking that those were the words — those upright lines? those curves, angles, dots?
No, those are not the words — the substantial words are in the ground and sea,
They are in the air — they are in you.

3. Were you thinking that those were the words — those delicious sounds out of your friends' mouths?
No, the real words are more delicious than they.

4. Human bodies are words, myriads of words,
In the best poems re-appears the body, man's or woman's, well-shaped, natural, gay,
Every part able, active, receptive, without shame or the need of shame.

5. Air, soil, water, fire, these are words,
I myself am a word with them — my qualities interpenetrate with theirs — my name is nothing to them,
Though it were told in the three thousand languages, what would air, soil, water, fire, know of my name?

6. A healthy presence, a friendly or commanding gesture, are words, sayings, meanings,
The charms that go with the mere looks of some men and women, are sayings and meanings also.

7. The workmanship of Souls is by the inaudible words of the earth,
The great masters, the sayers, know the earth's words, and use them more than the audible words.

8. Amelioration is one of the earth's words,
The earth neither lags nor hastens,
It has all attributes, growths, effects, latent in itself from the jump,
It is not half beautiful only — defects and excrescences show just as much as perfections show.

9. The earth does not withhold, it is generous enough,
The truths of the earth continually wait, they are not so concealed either,
They are calm, subtle, untransmissible by print,
They are imbued through all things, conveying themselves willingly,
Conveying a sentiment and invitation of the earth — I utter and utter,

I speak not, yet if you hear me not, of what avail am I to you?
To bear — to better — lacking these, of what avail am I?

10. Accouche! Accouchez!
Will you rot your own fruit in yourself there?
Will you squat and stifle there?

11. The earth does not argue,
Is not pathetic, has no arrangements,
Does not scream, haste, persuade, threaten, promise,
Makes no discriminations, has no conceivable failures,
Closes nothing, refuses nothing, shuts none out,
Of all the powers, objects, states, it notifies, shuts none out.

12. The earth does not exhibit itself, nor refuse to exhibit itself — possesses still underneath,
Underneath the ostensible sounds, the august chorus of heroes, the wail of slaves,
Persuasions of lovers, curses, gasps of the dying, laughter of young people, accents of bargainers,
Underneath these, possessing the words that never fail.

13. To her children, the words of the eloquent dumb great mother never fail,
The true words do not fail, for motion does not fail, and reflection does not fail,
Also the day and night do not fail, and the voyage we pursue does not fail.

14. Of the interminable sisters,
Of the ceaseless cotillions of sisters,
Of the centripetal and centrifugal sisters, the elder and younger sisters,
The beautiful sister we know dances on with the rest.

15. With her ample back toward every beholder,
With the fascinations of youth, and the equal fascinations of age,
Sits she whom I too love like the rest — sits undisturbed,
Holding up in her hand what has the character of a mirror, while her eyes glance back from it,
Glance as she sits, inviting none, denying none,
Holding a mirror day and night tirelessly before her own face.

16. Seen at hand, or seen at a distance,
Duly the twenty-four appear in public every day,
Duly approach and pass with their companions, or a companion,
Looking from no countenances of their own, but from the countenances of those who are with them,
From the countenances of children or women, or the manly countenance,
From the open countenances of animals, or from inanimate things,
From the landscape or waters, or from the exquisite apparition of the sky,
From our countenances, mine and yours, faithfully returning them,
Every day in public appearing without fail, but never twice with the same companions.

17. Embracing man, embracing all, proceed the three hundred and sixty-five resistlessly round the sun,
Embracing all, soothing, supporting, follow close three hundred and sixty-five offsets of the first, sure and necessary as they.

18. Tumbling on steadily, nothing dreading,
Sunshine, storm, cold, heat, forever withstanding, passing, carrying,
The Soul's realization and determination still inheriting,
The fluid vacuum around and ahead still entering and dividing,
No balk retarding, no anchor anchoring, on no rock striking,
Swift, glad, content, unbereaved, nothing losing,
Of all able and ready at any time to give strict account,
The divine ship sails the divine sea.

19. Whoever you are! motion and reflection are especially for you,
The divine ship sails the divine sea for you.

20. Whoever you are! you are he or she for whom the earth is solid and liquid,
You are he or she for whom the sun and moon hang in the sky,
For none more than you are the present and the past,
For none more than you is immortality.

21. Each man to himself, and each woman to herself, is the word of the past and present, and the word of immortality,

No one can acquire for another — not one!
Not one can grow for another — not one!

22. The song is to the singer, and comes back most to him,
The teaching is to the teacher, and comes back most to him,
The murder is to the murderer, and comes back most to him,
The theft is to the thief, and comes back most to him,
The love is to the lover, and comes back most to him,
The gift is to the giver, and comes back most to him — it cannot fail,
The oration is to the orator, and the acting is to the actor and actress, not to the audience,
And no man understands any greatness or goodness but his own, or the indication of his own.

23. I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete!
I swear the earth remains broken and jagged only to him or her who remains broken and jagged!

24. I swear there is no greatness or power that does not emulate those of the earth!
I swear there can be no theory of any account, unless it corroborate the theory of the earth!
No politics, art, religion, behavior, or what not, is of account, unless it compare with the amplitude of the earth,
Unless it face the exactness, vitality, impartiality, rectitude of the earth.

25. I swear I begin to see love with sweeter spasms than that which responds love!

It is that which contains itself, which never invites and never refuses.

26. I swear I begin to see little or nothing in audible words!
I swear I think all merges toward the presentation of the unspoken meanings of the earth!
Toward him who sings the songs of the body, and of the truths of the earth,
Toward him who makes the dictionaries of the words that print cannot touch.

27. I swear I see what is better than to tell the best,
It is always to leave the best untold.

28. When I undertake to tell the best, I find I cannot,
My tongue is ineffectual on its pivots,
My breath will not be obedient to its organs,
I become a dumb man.

29. The best of the earth cannot be told anyhow — all or any is best,
It is not what you anticipated — it is cheaper, easier, nearer,
Things are not dismissed from the places they held before,
The earth is just as positive and direct as it was before,
Facts, religions, improvements, politics, trades, are as real as before,
But the Soul is also real, — it too is positive and direct,
No reasoning, no proof has established it,
Undeniable growth has established it.

30. This is a poem for the sayers of words — these are hints of meanings,
These are they that echo the tones of Souls, and the phrases of Souls;
If they did not echo the phrases of Souls, what were they then?
If they had not reference to you in especial, what were they then?

31. I swear I will never henceforth have to do with the faith that tells the best!
I will have to do with that faith only that leaves the best untold.

32. Say on, sayers!
Delve! mould! pile the words of the earth!
Work on — it is materials you bring, not breaths;
Work on, age after age! nothing is to be lost,
It may have to wait long, but it will certainly come in use,
When the materials are all prepared, the architects shall appear.

33. I swear to you the architects shall appear without fail!
I announce them and lead them,
I swear to you they will understand you and justify you,
I swear to you the greatest among them shall be he who best knows you, and encloses all, and is faithful to all,
I swear to you, he and the rest shall not forget you — they shall perceive that you are not an iota less than they,
I swear to you, you shall be glorified in them.

A BOSTON BALLAD,

The 78th Year of Theſe States.

1. CLEAR the way there, Jonathan!
   Way for the President's marshal! Way for the government cannon!
   Way for the federal foot and dragoons—and the apparitions copiously tumbling.

2. I rose this morning early, to get betimes in Boston town,
   Here's a good place at the corner, I must stand and see the show.

3. I love to look on the stars and stripes, I hope the fifes will play Yankee Doodle.

4. How bright shine the cutlasses of the foremost troops!
   Every man holds his revolver, marching stiff through Boston town.

5. A fog follows — antiques of the same come limping,
   Some appear wooden-legged, and some appear bandaged and bloodless.

6. Why this is a show! It has called the dead out of the earth!
The old grave-yards of the hills have hurried to see!
Uncountable phantoms gather by flank and rear of it!
Cocked hats of mothy mould! crutches made of mist!
Arms in slings! old men leaning on young men's shoulders!

7. What troubles you, Yankee phantoms? What is all this chattering of bare gums?
Does the ague convulse your limbs? Do you mistake your crutches for fire-locks, and level them?

8. If you blind your eyes with tears, you will not see the President's marshal,
If you groan such groans you might balk the government cannon.

9. For shame, old maniacs! Bring down those tossed arms, and let your white hair be,
Here gape your smart grand-sons — their wives gaze at them from the windows,
See how well-dressed — see how orderly they conduct themselves.

10. Worse and worse! Can't you stand it? Are you retreating?
Is this hour with the living too dead for you?

11. Retreat then! Pell-mell!
Back to your graves! Back to the hills, old limpers!
I do not think you belong here, anyhow.

12. But there is one thing that belongs here — shall I tell you what it is, gentlemen of Boston?

13. I will whisper it to the Mayor — he shall send a committee to England,
They shall get a grant from the Parliament, go with a cart to the royal vault — haste!
Dig out King George's coffin, unwrap him quick from the grave-clothes, box up his bones for a journey,
Find a swift Yankee clipper — here is freight for you, black-bellied clipper,
Up with your anchor! shake out your sails! steer straight toward Boston bay.

14. Now call for the President's marshal again, bring out the government cannon,
Fetch home the roarers from Congress, make another procession, guard it with foot and dragoons.

15. This centre-piece for them:
Look! all orderly citizens — look from the windows, women!

16. The committee open the box, set up the regal ribs, glue those that will not stay,

Clap the skull on top of the ribs, and clap a crown on top of the skull.

17. You have got your revenge, old buster! The crown is come to its own, and more than its own.

18. Stick your hands in your pockets, Jonathan — you are a made man from this day,
You are mighty cute — and here is one of your bargains.

CALAMUS.

1.

In paths untrodden,
In the growth by margins of pond-waters,
Escaped from the life that exhibits itself,
From all the standards hitherto published — from the pleasures, profits, conformities,
Which too long I was offering to feed to my Soul;
Clear to me now, standards not yet published — clear to me that my Soul,
That the Soul of the man I speak for, feeds, rejoices only in comrades;
Here, by myself, away from the clank of the world,
Tallying and talked to here by tongues aromatic,
No longer abashed — for in this secluded spot I can respond as I would not dare elsewhere,
Strong upon me the life that does not exhibit itself, yet contains all the rest,
Resolved to sing no songs to-day but those of manly attachment,
Projecting them along that substantial life,
Bequeathing, hence, types of athletic love,

Afternoon, this delicious Ninth Month, in my forty-first year,
I proceed, for all who are, or have been, young men,
To tell the secret of my nights and days,
To celebrate the need of comrades.

2.

SCENTED herbage of my breast,
Leaves from you I yield, I write, to be perused best afterwards,
Tomb-leaves, body-leaves, growing up above me, above death,
Perennial roots, tall leaves — O the winter shall not freeze you, delicate leaves,
Every year shall you bloom again — Out from where you retired, you shall emerge again;
O I do not know whether many, passing by, will discover you, or inhale your faint odor — but I believe a few will;
O slender leaves! O blossoms of my blood! I permit you to tell, in your own way, of the heart that is under you,
O burning and throbbing — surely all will one day be accomplished;
O I do not know what you mean, there underneath yourselves — you are not happiness,
You are often more bitter than I can bear — you burn and sting me,

Yet you are very beautiful to me, you faint-tinged roots — you make me think of Death,
Death is beautiful from you — (what indeed is beautiful, except Death and Love ?)
O I think it is not for life I am chanting here my chant of lovers — I think it must be for Death,
For how calm, how solemn it grows, to ascend to the atmosphere of lovers,
Death or life I am then indifferent — my Soul declines to prefer,
I am not sure but the high Soul of lovers welcomes death most ;
Indeed, O Death, I think now these leaves mean precisely the same as you mean ;
Grow up taller, sweet leaves, that I may see ! Grow up out of my breast !
Spring away from the concealed heart there !
Do not fold yourselves so in your pink-tinged roots, timid leaves !
Do not remain down there so ashamed, herbage of my breast !
Come, I am determined to unbare this broad breast of mine — I have long enough stifled and choked ;
Emblematic and capricious blades, I leave you — now you serve me not,
Away ! I will say what I have to say, by itself,
I will escape from the sham that was proposed to me,
I will sound myself and comrades only — I will never again utter a call, only their call,
I will raise, with it, immortal reverberations through The States,
I will give an example to lovers, to take permanent shape and will through The States ;

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Through me shall the words be said to make death exhilarating,
Give me your tone therefore, O Death, that I may accord with it,
Give me yourself — for I see that you belong to me now above all, and are folded together above all — you Love and Death are,
Nor will I allow you to balk me any more with what I was calling life,
For now it is conveyed to me that you are the purports essential,
That you hide in these shifting forms of life, for reasons — and that they are mainly for you,
That you, beyond them, come forth, to remain, the real reality,
That behind the mask of materials you patiently wait, no matter how long,
That you will one day, perhaps, take control of all,
That you will perhaps dissipate this entire show of appearance,
That may be you are what it is all for — but it does not last so very long,
But you will last very long.

3.

1. WHOEVER you are holding me now in hand,
Without one thing all will be useless,
I give you fair warning, before you attempt me further,
I am not what you supposed, but far different.

2. Who is he that would become my follower?
Who would sign himself a candidate for my affections? Are you he?

3. The way is suspicious — the result slow, uncertain, may-be destructive;
You would have to give up all else — I alone would expect to be your God, sole and exclusive,
Your novitiate would even then be long and exhausting,
The whole past theory of your life, and all conformity to the lives around you, would have to be abandoned;
Therefore release me now, before troubling yourself any further — Let go your hand from my shoulders,
Put me down, and depart on your way.

4. Or else, only by stealth, in some wood, for trial,
Or back of a rock, in the open air,
(For in any roofed room of a house I emerge not — nor in company,
And in libraries I lie as one dumb, a gawk, or unborn, or dead,)
But just possibly with you on a high hill — first watching lest any person, for miles around, approach unawares,
Or possibly with you sailing at sea, or on the beach of the sea, or some quiet island,
Here to put your lips upon mine I permit you,
With the comrade's long-dwelling kiss, or the new husband's kiss,
For I am the new husband, and I am the comrade.

5. Or, if you will, thrusting me beneath your clothing,
Where I may feel the throbs of your heart, or rest upon your hip,
Carry me when you go forth over land or sea;
For thus, merely touching you, is enough — is best,
And thus, touching you, would I silently sleep and be carried eternally.

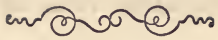
6. But these leaves conning, you con at peril,
For these leaves, and me, you will not understand,
They will elude you at first, and still more afterward — I will certainly elude you,
Even while you should think you had unquestionably caught me, behold!
Already you see I have escaped from you.

7. For it is not for what I have put into it that I have written this book,
Nor is it by reading it you will acquire it,
Nor do those know me best who admire me, and vauntingly praise me,
Nor will the candidates for my love, (unless at most a very few,) prove victorious,
Nor will my poems do good only — they will do just as much evil, perhaps more,
For all is useless without that which you may guess at many times and not hit — that which I hinted at,
Therefore release me, and depart on your way.

4.

THESE I, singing in spring, collect for lovers,
(For who but I should understand lovers, and all their sorrow and joy?
And who but I should be the poet of comrades?)
Collecting, I traverse the garden, the world — but soon I pass the gates,
Now along the pond-side — now wading in a little, fearing not the wet,
Now by the post-and-rail fences, where the old stones thrown there, picked from the fields, have accumulated,
Wild-flowers and vines and weeds come up through the stones, and partly cover them — Beyond these I pass,
Far, far in the forest, before I think where I get,
Solitary, smelling the earthy smell, stopping now and then in the silence,
Alone I had thought — yet soon a silent troop gathers around me,
Some walk by my side, and some behind, and some embrace my arms or neck,
They, the spirits of friends, dead or alive — thicker they come, a great crowd, and I in the middle,
Collecting, dispensing, singing in spring, there I wander with them,
Plucking something for tokens — something for these, till I hit upon a name — tossing toward whoever is near me,

Here! lilac, with a branch of pine,
Here, out of my pocket, some moss which I pulled off a live-oak in Florida, as it hung trailing down,
Here, some pinks and laurel leaves, and a handful of sage,
And here what I now draw from the water, wading in the pond-side,
(O here I last saw him that tenderly loves me — and returns again, never to separate from me,
And this, O this shall henceforth be the token of comrades — this calamus-root shall,
Interchange it, youths, with each other! Let none render it back!)
And twigs of maple, and a bunch of wild orange, and chestnut,
And stems of currants, and plum-blows, and the aromatic cedar;
These I, compassed around by a thick cloud of spirits,
Wandering, point to, or touch as I pass, or throw them loosely from me,
Indicating to each one what he shall have — giving something to each,
But what I drew from the water by the pond-side, that I reserve,
I will give of it — but only to them that love, as I myself am capable of loving.



5.

1. STATES!
Were you looking to be held together by the lawyers?
By an agreement on a paper? Or by arms?

2. Away!
I arrive, bringing these, beyond all the forces of courts and arms,
These! to hold you together as firmly as the earth itself is held together.

3. The old breath of life, ever new,
Here! I pass it by contact to you, America.

4. O mother! have you done much for me?
Behold, there shall from me be much done for you.

5. There shall from me be a new friendship — It shall be called after my name,
It shall circulate through The States, indifferent of place,
It shall twist and intertwist them through and around each other — Compact shall they be, showing new signs,
Affection shall solve every one of the problems of freedom,
Those who love each other shall be invincible,
They shall finally make America completely victorious, in my name.

6. One from Massachusetts shall be comrade to a Missourian,
One from Maine or Vermont, and a Carolinian and an Oregonese, shall be friends triune, more precious to each other than all the riches of the earth.

7. To Michigan shall be wafted perfume from Florida,
To the Mannahatta from Cuba or Mexico,
Not the perfume of flowers, but sweeter, and wafted beyond death.

8. No danger shall balk Columbia's lovers,
If need be, a thousand shall sternly immolate themselves for one,
The Kanuck shall be willing to lay down his life for the Kansian, and the Kansian for the Kanuck, on due need.

9. It shall be customary in all directions, in the houses and streets, to see manly affection,
The departing brother or friend shall salute the remaining brother or friend with a kiss.

10. There shall be innovations,
There shall be countless linked hands — namely, the Northeasterner's, and the Northwesterner's, and the Southwesterner's, and those of the interior, and all their brood,
These shall be masters of the world under a new power,
They shall laugh to scorn the attacks of all the remainder of the world.

11. The most dauntless and rude shall touch face to face lightly,
The dependence of Liberty shall be lovers,
The continuance of Equality shall be comrades.

12. These shall tie and band stronger than hoops of iron,
I, extatic, O partners! O lands! henceforth with the love of lovers tie you.

13. I will make the continent indissoluble,
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever yet shone upon,
I will make divine magnetic lands.

14. I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies,
I will make inseparable cities, with their arms about each other's necks.

15. For you these, from me, O Democracy, to serve you, ma femme!
For you! for you, I am trilling these songs.

6.

NOT heaving from my ribbed breast only,
Not in sighs at night, in rage, dissatisfied with myself,
Not in those long-drawn, ill-suppressed sighs,
Not in many an oath and promise broken,
Not in my wilful and savage soul's volition,

Not in the subtle nourishment of the air,
Not in this beating and pounding at my temples and wrists,
Not in the curious systole and diastole within, which will one day cease,
Not in many a hungry wish, told to the skies only,
Not in cries, laughter, defiances, thrown from me when alone, far in the wilds,
Not in husky pantings through clenched teeth,
Not in sounded and resounded words — chattering words, echoes, dead words,
Not in the murmurs of my dreams while I sleep,
Nor the other murmurs of these incredible dreams of every day,
Nor in the limbs and senses of my body, that take you and dismiss you continually — Not there,
Not in any or all of them, O adhesiveness! O pulse of my life!
Need I that you exist and show yourself, any more than in these songs.

7.

Of the terrible question of appearances,
Of the doubts, the uncertainties after all,
That may-be reliance and hope are but speculations after all,
That may-be identity beyond the grave is a beautiful fable only,
May-be the things I perceive — the animals, plants, men, hills, shining and flowing waters,

The skies of day and night — colors, densities, forms — May-be these are, (as doubtless they are,) only apparitions, and the real something has yet to be known,

(How often they dart out of themselves, as if to confound me and mock me!

How often I think neither I know, nor any man knows, aught of them;)

May-be they only seem to me what they are, (as doubtless they indeed but seem,) as from my present point of view — And might prove, (as of course they would,) naught of what they appear, or naught any how, from entirely changed points of view;

To me, these, and the like of these, are curiously answered by my lovers, my dear friends;

When he whom I love travels with me, or sits a long while holding me by the hand,

When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words and reason hold not, surround us and pervade us,

Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom — I am silent — I require nothing further,

I cannot answer the question of appearances, or that of identity beyond the grave,

But I walk or sit indifferent — I am satisfied,

He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me.

8.

LONG I thought that knowledge alone would suffice me — O if I could but obtain knowledge!

Then my lands engrossed me — Lands of the prairies, Ohio's land, the southern savannas, engrossed me — For them I would live — I would be their orator;

Then I met the examples of old and new heroes — I heard of warriors, sailors, and all dauntless persons — And it seemed to me that I too had it in me to be as dauntless as any — and would be so;

And then, to enclose all, it came to me to strike up the songs of the New World — And then I believed my life must be spent in singing;

But now take notice, land of the prairies, land of the south savannas, Ohio's land,

Take notice, you Kanuck woods — and you Lake Huron — and all that with you roll toward Niagara — and you Niagara also,

And you, Californian mountains — That you each and all find somebody else to be your singer of songs,

For I can be your singer of songs no longer — One who loves me is jealous of me, and withdraws me from all but love,

With the rest I dispense — I sever from what I thought would suffice me, for it does not — it is now empty and tasteless to me,

I heed knowledge, and the grandeur of The States, and the example of heroes, no more,

I am indifferent to my own songs — I will go with him I love,
It is to be enough for us that we are together — We never separate again.

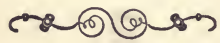
9.

HOURS continuing long, sore and heavy-hearted,
Hours of the dusk, when I withdraw to a lonesome and unfrequented spot, seating myself, leaning my face in my hands;
Hours sleepless, deep in the night, when I go forth, speeding swiftly the country roads, or through the city streets, or pacing miles and miles, stifling plaintive cries;
Hours discouraged, distracted — for the one I cannot content myself without, soon I saw him content himself without me;
Hours when I am forgotten, (O weeks and months are passing, but I believe I am never to forget!)
Sullen and suffering hours! (I am ashamed — but it is useless — I am what I am;)
Hours of my torment — I wonder if other men ever have the like, out of the like feelings?
Is there even one other like me — distracted — his friend, his lover, lost to him?
Is he too as I am now? Does he still rise in the morning, dejected, thinking who is lost to him? and at night, awaking, think who is lost?

Does he too harbor his friendship silent and endless? harbor his anguish and passion?

Does some stray reminder, or the casual mention of a name, bring the fit back upon him, taciturn and deprest?

Does he see himself reflected in me? In these hours, does he see the face of his hours reflected?



10.

You bards of ages hence! when you refer to me, mind not so much my poems,

Nor speak of me that I prophesied of The States, and led them the way of their glories;

But come, I will take you down underneath this impassive exterior — I will tell you what to say of me:

Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover,

The friend, the lover's portrait, of whom his friend, his lover, was fondest,

Who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love within him — and freely poured it forth,

Who often walked lonesome walks, thinking of his dear friends, his lovers,

Who pensive, away from one he loved, often lay sleepless and dissatisfied at night,

Who knew too well the sick, sick dread lest the one he loved might secretly be indifferent to him,

Whose happiest days were far away, through fields, in woods, on hills, he and another, wandering hand in hand, they twain, apart from other men,
Who oft as he sauntered the streets, curved with his arm the shoulder of his friend — while the arm of his friend rested upon him also.

11.

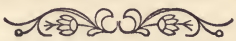
WHEN I heard at the close of the day how my name had been received with plaudits in the capitol, still it was not a happy night for me that followed;
And else, when I caroused, or when my plans were accomplished, still I was not happy;
But the day when I rose at dawn from the bed of perfect health, refreshed, singing, inhaling the ripe breath of autumn,
When I saw the full moon in the west grow pale and disappear in the morning light,
When I wandered alone over the beach, and, undressing, bathed, laughing with the cool waters, and saw the sun rise,
And when I thought how my dear friend, my lover, was on his way coming, O then I was happy;
O then each breath tasted sweeter — and all that day my food nourished me more — And the beautiful day passed well,
And the next came with equal joy — And with the next, at evening, came my friend;

And that night, while all was still, I heard the waters
roll slowly continually up the shores,
I heard the hissing rustle of the liquid and sands,
as directed to me, whispering, to congratulate
me,
For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the
same cover in the cool night,
In the stillness, in the autumn moonbeams, his face
was inclined toward me,
And his arm lay lightly around my breast — And that
night I was happy.

12.

ARE you the new person drawn toward me, and asking
something significant from me?
To begin with, take warning — I am probably far
different from what you suppose;
Do you suppose you will find in me your ideal?
Do you think it so easy to have me become your
lover?
Do you think the friendship of me would be unalloyed
satisfaction?
Do you suppose I am trusty and faithful?
Do you see no further than this façade — this smooth
and tolerant manner of me?
Do you suppose yourself advancing on real ground
toward a real heroic man?
Have you no thought, O dreamer, that it may be all
maya, illusion? O the next step may precipitate
you!

O let some past deceived one hiss in your ears, how many have prest on the same as you are pressing now,
How many have fondly supposed what you are supposing now — only to be disappointed.



13.

CALAMUS taste,
(For I must change the strain — these are not to be pensive leaves, but leaves of joy,)
Roots and leaves unlike any but themselves,
Scents brought to men and women from the wild woods, and from the pond-side,
Breast-sorrel and pinks of love — fingers that wind around tighter than vines,
Gushes from the throats of birds, hid in the foliage of trees, as the sun is risen,
Breezes of land and love — Breezes set from living shores out to you on the living sea — to you, O sailors!
Frost-mellowed berries, and Third Month twigs, offered fresh to young persons wandering out in the fields when the winter breaks up,
Love-buds, put before you and within you, whoever you are,
Buds to be unfolded on the old terms,
If you bring the warmth of the sun to them, they will open, and bring form, color, perfume, to you,
If you become the aliment and the wet, they will become flowers, fruits, tall branches and trees,

They are comprised in you just as much as in themselves — perhaps more than in themselves,
They are not comprised in one season or succession, but many successions,
They have come slowly up out of the earth and me, and are to come slowly up out of you.

14.

NOT heat flames up and consumes,
Not sea-waves hurry in and out,
Not the air, delicious and dry, the air of the ripe summer, bears lightly along white down-balls of myriads of seeds, wafted, sailing gracefully, to drop where they may,
Not these — O none of these, more than the flames of me, consuming, burning for his love whom I love!
O none, more than I, hurrying in and out;
Does the tide hurry, seeking something, and never give up? O I the same;
O nor down-balls, nor perfumes, nor the high rain-emitting clouds, are borne through the open air,
Any more than my Soul is borne through the open air,
Wafted in all directions, O love, for friendship, for you.

15.

O DROPS of me! trickle, slow drops,
Candid, from me falling — drip, bleeding drops,
From wounds made to free you whence you were prisoned,
From my face — from my forehead and lips,
From my breast — from within where I was concealed — Press forth, red drops — confession drops,
Stain every page — stain every song I sing, every word I say, bloody drops,
Let them know your scarlet heat — let them glisten,
Saturate them with yourself, all ashamed and wet,
Glow upon all I have written or shall write, bleeding drops,
Let it all be seen in your light, blushing drops.

16.

1. WHO is now reading this?

2. May-be one is now reading this who knows some wrong-doing of my past life,
Or may-be a stranger is reading this who has secretly loved me,
Or may-be one who meets all my grand assumptions and egotisms with derision,
Or may-be one who is puzzled at me.

3. As if I were not puzzled at myself!
Or as if I never deride myself! (O conscience-struck! O self-convicted!)
Or as if I do not secretly love strangers! (O tenderly, a long time, and never avow it;)
Or as if I did not see, perfectly well, interior in myself, the stuff of wrong-doing,
Or as if it could cease transpiring from me until it must cease.

17.

OF him I love day and night, I dreamed I heard he was dead,
And I dreamed I went where they had buried him I love — but he was not in that place,
And I dreamed I wandered, searching among burial-places, to find him,
And I found that every place was a burial-place,
The houses full of life were equally full of death, (This house is now,)
The streets, the shipping, the places of amusement, the Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, the Manna-hatta, were as full of the dead as of the living,
And fuller, O vastly fuller, of the dead than of the living;
— And what I dreamed I will henceforth tell to every person and age,
And I stand henceforth bound to what I dreamed;
And now I am willing to disregard burial-places, and dispense with them,

And if the memorials of the dead were put up indifferently everywhere, even in the room where I eat or sleep, I should be satisfied,
And if the corpse of any one I love, or if my own corpse, be duly rendered to powder, and poured in the sea, I shall be satisfied,
Or if it be distributed to the winds, I shall be satisfied.

18.

CITY of my walks and joys!
City whom that I have lived and sung there will one day make you illustrious,
Not the pageants of you — not your shifting tableaux, your spectacles, repay me,
Not the interminable rows of your houses — nor the ships at the wharves,
Nor the processions in the streets, nor the bright windows, with goods in them,
Nor to converse with learned persons, or bear my share in the soiree or feast;
Not those -- but, as I pass, O Manhattan! your frequent and swift flash of eyes offering me love,
Offering me the response of my own — these repay me,
Lovers, continual lovers, only repay me.

19.

1. MIND you the the timid models of the rest, the majority?
Long I minded them, but hence I will not — for I have adopted models for myself, and now offer them to The Lands.

2. Behold this swarthy and unrefined face — these gray eyes,
This beard — the white wool, unclipt upon my neck,
My brown hands, and the silent manner of me, without charm;
Yet comes one, a Manhattanese, and ever at parting, kisses me lightly on the lips with robust love,
And I, in the public room, or on the crossing of the street, or on the ship's deck, kiss him in return;
We observe that salute of American comrades, land and sea,
We are those two natural and nonchalant persons.

20.

I SAW in Louisiana a live-oak growing,
All alone stood it, and the moss hung down from the branches,
Without any companion it grew there, uttering joyous leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,

But I wondered how it could utter joyous leaves,
standing alone there, without its friend, its
lover near — for I knew I could not,
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of
leaves upon it, and twined around it a little
moss,
And brought it away — and I have placed it in sight
in my room,
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear
friends,
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of
them,)
Yet it remains to me a curious token — it makes me
think of manly love;
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in
Louisiana, solitary, in a wide flat space,
Uttering joyous leaves all its life, without a friend, a
lover, near,
I know very well I could not.

21.

Music always round me, unceasing, unbeginning —
yet long untaught I did not hear,
But now the chorus I hear, and am elated,
A tenor, strong, ascending, with power and health,
with glad notes of day-break I hear,
A soprano, at intervals, sailing buoyantly over the
tops of immense waves,
A transparent base, shuddering lusciously under and
through the universe,

The triumphant tutti — the funeral wailings, with sweet flutes and violins — All these I fill myself with;
I hear not the volumes of sound merely — I am moved by the exquisite meanings,
I listen to the different voices winding in and out, striving, contending with fiery vehemence to excel each other in emotion,
I do not think the performers know themselves — But now I think I begin to know them.

22.

PASSING stranger! you do not know how longingly I look upon you,
You must be he I was seeking, or she I was seeking, (It comes to me, as of a dream,)
I have somewhere surely lived a life of joy with you,
All is recalled as we flit by each other, fluid, affectionate, chaste, matured,
You grew up with me, were a boy with me, or a girl with me,
I ate with you, and slept with you — your body has become not yours only, nor left my body mine only,
You give me the pleasure of your eyes, face, flesh, as we pass — you take of my beard, breast, hands, in return,
I am not to speak to you — I am to think of you when I sit alone, or wake at night alone,

I am to wait — I do not doubt I am to meet you again,
I am to see to it that I do not lose you.

23.

THIS moment as I sit alone, yearning and thoughtful, it seems to me there are other men in other lands, yearning and thoughtful;
It seems to me I can look over and behold them, in Germany, Italy, France, Spain — Or far, far away, in China, or in Russia or India — talking other dialects;
And it seems to me if I could know those men better, I should become attached to them, as I do to men in my own lands,
It seems to me they are as wise, beautiful, benevolent, as any in my own lands;
O I know we should be brethren and lovers,
I know I should be happy with them.

24.

I HEAR it is charged against me that I seek to destroy institutions;
But really I am neither for nor against institutions,
(What indeed have I in common with them? — Or what with the destruction of them?)

Only I will establish in the Mannahatta, and in every
city of These States, inland and seaboard,
And in the fields and woods, and above every keel
little or large, that dents the water,
Without edifices, or rules, or trustees, or any ar-
gument,
The institution of the dear love of comrades.

25.

THE prairie-grass dividing — its own odor breathing,
I demand of it the spiritual corresponding,
Demand the most copious and close companionship
of men,
Demand the blades to rise of words, acts, beings,
Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh,
nutritious,
Those that go their own gait, erect, stepping with
freedom and command — leading, not following,
Those with a never-quell'd audacity — those with
sweet and lusty flesh, clear of taint, choice and
chary of its love-power,
Those that look carelessly in the faces of Presidents
and Governors, as to say, *Who are you?*
Those of earth-born passion, simple, never constrained,
never obedient,
Those of inland America.

26.

WE two boys together clinging,
One the other never leaving,
Up and down the roads going — North and South excursions making,
Power enjoying — elbows stretching — fingers clutching,
Armed and fearless — eating, drinking, sleeping, loving,
No law less than ourselves owning — sailing, soldiering, thieving, threatening,
Misers, menials, priests alarming — air breathing, water drinking, on the turf or the sea-beach dancing,
With birds singing — With fishes swimming — With trees branching and leafing,
Cities wrenching, ease scorning, statutes mocking, feebleness chasing,
Fulfilling our foray.

27.

O LOVE!
O dying — always dying!
O the burials of me, past and present!
O me, while I stride ahead, material, visible, imperious as ever!

O me, what I was for years, now dead, (I lament not
— I am content;)
O to disengage myself from those corpses of me,
which I turn and look at, where I cast them!
To pass on, (O living! always living!) and leave the
corpses behind!

28.

WHEN I peruse the conquered fame of heroes, and the
victories of mighty generals, I do not envy the
generals,
Nor the President in his Presidency, nor the rich in
his great house;
But when I read of the brotherhood of lovers, how it
was with them,
How through life, through dangers, odium, un-
changing, long and long,
Through youth, and through middle and old age, how
unfaltering, how affectionate and faithful they
were,
Then I am pensive — I hastily put down the book,
and walk away, filled with the bitterest envy.

29.

ONE flitting glimpse, caught through an interstice,
Of a crowd of workmen and drivers in a bar-room, around the stove, late of a winter night — And I unremarked, seated in a corner;
Of a youth who loves me, and whom I love, silently approaching, and seating himself near, that he may hold me by the hand;
A long while, amid the noises of coming and going — of drinking and oath and smutty jest,
There we two, content, happy in being together, speaking little, perhaps not a word.

30.

A PROMISE and gift to California,
Also to the great Pastoral Plains, and for Oregon:
Sojourning east a while longer, soon I travel to you, to remain, to teach robust American love;
For I know very well that I and robust love belong among you, inland, and along the Western Sea,
For These States tend inland, and toward the Western Sea — and I will also.

31.

1. WHAT ship, puzzled at sea, cons for the true reckoning?
Or, coming in, to avoid the bars, and follow the channel, a perfect pilot needs?
Here, sailor! Here, ship! take aboard the most perfect pilot,
Whom, in a little boat, putting off, and rowing, I, hailing you, offer.

2. What place is besieged, and vainly tries to raise the siege?
Lo! I send to that place a commander, swift, brave, immortal,
And with him horse and foot — and parks of artillery,
And artillerymen, the deadliest that ever fired gun.

32.

WHAT think you I take my pen in hand to record?
The battle-ship, perfect-model'd, majestic, that I saw pass the offing to-day under full sail?
The splendors of the past day? Or the splendor of the night that envelops me?
Or the vaunted glory and growth of the great city spread around me? — No;
But I record of two simple men I saw to-day, on the pier, in the midst of the crowd, parting the parting of dear friends,

The one to remain hung on the other's neck, and passionately kissed him,
While the one to depart, tightly prest the one to remain in his arms.

33.

No labor-saving machine,
Nor discovery have I made,
Nor will I be able to leave behind me any wealthy bequest to found a hospital or library,
Nor reminiscence of any deed of courage, for America,
Nor literary success, nor intellect — nor book for the book-shelf;
Only these carols, vibrating through the air, I leave,
For comrades and lovers.

34.

I dreamed in a dream, I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth,
I dreamed that was the new City of Friends,
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love — it led the rest,
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that city,
And in all their looks and words.

35.

To you of New England,
To the man of the Seaside State, and of Pennsylvania,
To the Kanadian of the north — to the Southerner I love,
These, with perfect trust, to depict you as myself — the germs are in all men;
I believe the main purport of These States is to found a superb friendship, exalté, previously unknown,
Because I perceive it waits, and has been always waiting, latent in all men.

36.

EARTH! my likeness!
Though you look so impassive, ample and spheric there,
I now suspect that is not all;
I now suspect there is something fierce in you, eligible to burst forth;
For an athlete is enamoured of me — and I of him,
But toward him there is something fierce and terrible in me, eligible to burst forth,
I dare not tell it in words — not even in these songs.

37.

A LEAF for hand in hand!
You natural persons old and young! You on the Eastern Sea, and you on the Western!
You on the Mississippi, and on all the branches and bayous of the Mississippi!
You friendly boatmen and mechanics! You roughs!
You twain! And all processions moving along the streets!
I wish to infuse myself among you till I see it common for you to walk hand in hand.

38.

PRIMEVAL my love for the woman I love,
O bride! O wife! more resistless, more enduring than I can tell, the thought of you!
Then separate, as disembodied, the purest born,
The ethereal, the last athletic reality, my consolation,
I ascend — I float in the regions of your love, O man,
O sharer of my roving life.

39.

SOMETIMES with one I love, I fill myself with rage, for fear I effuse unreturned love;
But now I think there is no unreturned love — the pay is certain, one way or another,

Doubtless I could not have perceived the universe,
or written one of my poems, if I had not freely
given myself to comrades, to love.

40.

THAT shadow, my likeness, that goes to and fro, seeking a livelihood, chattering, chaffering,
How often I find myself standing and looking at it where it flits,
How often I question and doubt whether that is really me;
But in these, and among my lovers, and carolling my songs,
O I never doubt whether that is really me.

41.

1. AMONG the men and women, the multitude, I perceive one picking me out by secret and divine signs,
Acknowledging none else — not parent, wife, husband, brother, child, any nearer than I am;
Some are baffled — But that one is not — that one knows me.

2. Lover and perfect equal!
I meant that you should discover me so, by my faint indirections,
And I, when I meet you, mean to discover you by the like in you.

42.

To the young man, many things to absorb, to engraft, to develop, I teach, to help him become élève of mine,
But if blood like mine circle not in his veins,
If he be not silently selected by lovers, and do not silently select lovers,
Of what use is it that he seek to become élève of mine?

43.

O YOU whom I often and silently come where you are, that I may be with you,
As I walk by your side, or sit near, or remain in the same room with you,
Little you know the subtle electric fire that for your sake is playing within me.

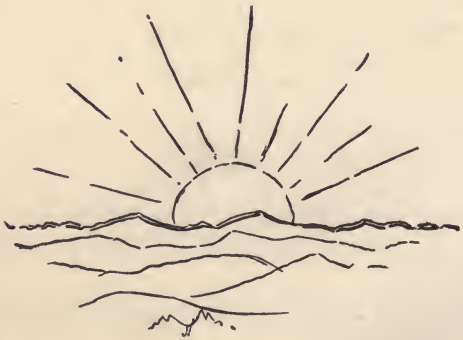
44.

HERE my last words, and the most baffling,
Here the frailest leaves of me, and yet my strongest-lasting,
Here I shade down and hide my thoughts — I do not expose them,
And yet they expose me more than all my other poems.

45.

1. FULL of life, sweet-blooded, compact, visible,
I, forty years old the Eighty-third Year of The States,
To one a century hence, or any number of centuries hence,
To you, yet unborn, these, seeking you.

2. When you read these, I, that was visible, am become invisible;
Now it is you, compact, visible, realizing my poems, seeking me,
Fancying how happy you were, if I could be with you, and become your lover;
Be it as if I were with you. Be not too certain but I am now with you.



CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY.

1. FLOOD-TIDE below me! I watch you, face to face;
Clouds of the west! sun there half an hour high! I see you also face to face.

2. Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes! how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats, the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious to me than you suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence, are more to me, and more in my meditations, than you might suppose.

3. The impalpable sustenance of me from all things, at all hours of the day,
The simple, compact, well-joined scheme — myself disintegrated, every one disintegrated, yet part of the scheme,
The similitudes of the past, and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings — on the walk in the street, and the passage over the river,

The current rushing so swiftly, and swimming with me far away,
The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
The certainty of others — the life, love, sight, hearing of others.

4. Others will enter the gates of the ferry, and cross from shore to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east,
Others will see the islands large and small,
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring in of the flood-tide, the falling back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

5. It avails not, neither time or place — distance avails not,
I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence,
I project myself — also I return — I am with you, and know how it is.

6. Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
Just as you are refreshed by the gladness of the river, and the bright flow, I was refreshed,

Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood, yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships, and the thick-stemmed pipes of steamboats, I looked.

7. I too many and many a time crossed the river, the sun half an hour high,
I watched the Twelfth Month sea-gulls — I saw them high in the air, floating with motionless wings, oscillating their bodies,
I saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies, and left the rest in strong shadow,
I saw the slow-wheeling circles, and the gradual edging toward the south.

8. I too saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
Looked at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the shape of my head in the sun-lit water,
Looked on the haze on the hills southward and south-westward,
Looked on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
Looked toward the lower bay to notice the arriving ships,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at anchor,
The sailors at work in the rigging, or out astride the spars,

The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls,
the slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in
their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick trem-
ulous whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sun-set,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled
cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the
gray walls of the granite store-houses by the
docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug
closely flanked on each side by the barges — the
hay-boat, the belated lighter,
On the neighboring shore, the fires from the foundry
chimneys burning high and glaringly into the
night,
Casting their flicker of black, contrasted with wild
red and yellow light, over the tops of houses,
and down into the clefts of streets.

9. These, and all else, were to me the same as they are
to you,
I project myself a moment to tell you — also I
return.

10. I loved well those cities,
I loved well the stately and rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me,
Others the same — others who look back on me,
because I looked forward to them,
(The time will come, though I stop here to-day and
to-night.)

11. What is it, then, between us?
What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?

12. Whatever it is, it avails not — distance avails not, and place avails not.

13. I too lived, (I was of old Brooklyn,)
I too walked the streets of Manhattan Island, and bathed in the waters around it,
I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me,
In the day, among crowds of people, sometimes they came upon me,
In my walks home late at night, or as I lay in my bed, they came upon me.

14. I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
I too had received identity by my body,
That I was, I knew was of my body — and what I should be, I knew I should be of my body.

15. It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw patches down upon me also,
The best I had done seemed to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts, as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre? would not people laugh at me?

16. It is not you alone who know what it is to be evil,
I am he who knew what it was to be evil,

I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,
Blabbed, blushed, resented, lied, stole, grudged,
Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant,
The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting,
Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting.

17. But I was a Manhattanese, free, friendly, and proud!
I was called by my nighest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me approaching or passing,
Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh against me as I sat,
Saw many I loved in the street, or ferry-boat, or public assembly, yet never told them a word,
Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping,
Played the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
The same old rôle, the rôle that is what we make it, as great as we like,
Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

18. Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me, I had as much of you — I laid in my stores in advance,
I considered long and seriously of you before you were born.

19. Who was to know what should come home to me?
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot see me?

20. It is not you alone, nor I alone,
Not a few races, nor a few generations, nor a few centuries,
It is that each came, or comes, or shall come, from its due emission, without fail, either now, or then, or henceforth.

21. Every thing indicates — the smallest does, and the largest does,
A necessary film envelops all, and envelops the Soul for a proper time.

22. Now I am curious what sight can ever be more stately and admirable to me than my mast-hemm'd Manhatta,
My river and sun-set, and my scallop-edged waves of flood-tide,
The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the belated lighter;
Curious what Gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love call me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach,
Curious what is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in my face,
Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you.

23. We understand, then, do we not?
What I promised without mentioning it, have you not accepted?
What the study could not teach — what the preaching could not accomplish is accomplished, is it not?
What the push of reading could not start is started by me personally, is it not?

24. Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
Frolic on, crested and scallop-edged waves!
Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and women generations after me;
Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!
Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta! — stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn!
Bully for you! you proud, friendly, free Manhattanese!
Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers!
Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution!
Blab, blush, lie, steal, you or I or any one after us!
Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house, or street, or public assembly!
Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name!
Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress!
Play the old rôle, the rôle that is great or small, according as one makes it!

Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking upon you;
Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the hasting current;
Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air;
Receive the summer-sky, you water! and faithfully hold it, till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you;
Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one's head, in the sun-lit water;
Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sailed schooners, sloops, lighters!
Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lowered at sunset;
Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at nightfall! cast red and yellow light over the tops of the houses;
Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are;
You necessary film, continue to envelop the Soul;
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas;
Thrive, cities! bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers;
Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual;
Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting.

25. We descend upon you and all things — we arrest you all,
We realize the Soul only by you, you faithful solids and fluids,

Through you color, form, location, sublimity, ideality,
Through you every proof, comparison, and all the suggestions and determinations of ourselves.

26. You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers! you novices!
We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward,
Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us,
We use you, and do not cast you aside — we plant you permanently within us,
We fathom you not — we love you — there is perfection in you also,
You furnish your parts toward eternity,
Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the Soul.

LONGINGS FOR HOME.

O MAGNET-SOUTH! O glistening, perfumed South! My South!
O quick mettle, rich blood, impulse, and love! Good and evil! O all dear to me!
O dear to me my birth-things — All moving things, and the trees where I was born — the grains, plants, rivers;
Dear to me my own slow sluggish rivers where they flow, distant, over flats of silvery sands, or through swamps,
Dear to me the Roanoke, the Savannah, the Altamaha, the Pedee, the Tombigbee, the Santee, the Coosa, and the Sabine;
O pensive, far away wandering, I return with my Soul to haunt their banks again,
Again in Florida I float on transparent lakes — I float on the Okeechobee — I cross the hummock land, or through pleasant openings, or dense forests,
I see the parrots in the woods — I see the papaw tree and the blossoming titi;
Again, sailing in my coaster, on deck, I coast off Georgia — I coast up the Carolinas,
I see where the live-oak is growing — I see where the yellow-pine, the scented bay-tree, the lemon and orange, the cypress, the graceful palmetto;
I pass rude sea-headlands and enter Pamlico Sound through an inlet, and dart my vision inland,

O the cotton plant! the growing fields of rice, sugar, hemp!

The cactus, guarded with thorns — the laurel-tree, with large white flowers,

The range afar — the richness and barrenness — the old woods charged with mistletoe and trailing moss,

The piney odor and the gloom — the awful natural stillness, (Here in these dense swamps the free-booter carries his gun, and the fugitive slave has his concealed hut;)

O the strange fascination of these half-known, half-impassable swamps, infested by reptiles, resounding with the bellow of the alligator, the sad noises of the night-owl and the wild-cat, and the whirr of the rattlesnake;

The mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing all the forenoon — singing through the moon-lit night,

The humming-bird, the wild-turkey, the raccoon, the opossum;

A Tennessee corn-field — the tall, graceful, long-leaved corn — slender, flapping, bright green, with tassels — with beautiful ears, each well-sheathed in its husk,

An Arkansas prairie — a sleeping lake, or still bayou;

O my heart! O tender and fierce pangs — I can stand them not — I will depart;

O to be a Virginian, where I grew up! O to be a Carolinian!

O longings irrepressible! O I will go back to old Tennessee, and never wander more!

MESSENGER LEAVES.

To You, Whoever You Are.

WHOEVER you are, I fear you are walking the walks of dreams,
I fear those realities are to melt from under your feet and hands;
Even now, your features, joys, speech, house, trade, manners, troubles, follies, costume, crimes, dissipate away from you,
Your true Soul and body appear before me,
They stand forth out of affairs — out of commerce, shops, law, science, work, farms, clothes, the house, medicine, print, buying, selling, eating, drinking, suffering, dying.

2. Whoever you are, now I place my hand upon you, that you be my poem,
I whisper with my lips close to your ear,
I have loved many women and men, but I love none better than you.

3. O I have been dilatory and dumb,
I should have made my way straight to you long ago,
I should have blabbed nothing but you, I should have chanted nothing but you.

4. I will leave all, and come and make the hymns of you;
None have understood you, but I understand you,
None have done justice to you — you have not done justice to yourself,
None but have found you imperfect — I only find no imperfection in you,
None but would subordinate you — I only am he who will never consent to subordinate you,
I only am he who places over you no master, owner, better, God, beyond what waits intrinsically in yourself.

5. Painters have painted their swarming groups, and the centre figure of all,
From the head of the centre figure spreading a nimbus of gold-colored light,
But I paint myriads of heads, but paint no head without its nimbus of gold-colored light,
From my hand, from the brain of every man and woman it streams, effulgently flowing forever.

6. O I could sing such grandeurs and glories about you!
You have not known what you are — you have slumbered upon yourself all your life,
Your eyelids have been the same as closed most of the time,
What you have done returns already in mockeries,
Your thrift, knowledge, prayers, if they do not return in mockeries, what is their return?

7. The mockeries are not you,
Underneath them, and within them, I see you lurk,
I pursue you where none else has pursued you,

Silence, the desk, the flippant expression, the night,
the accustomed routine, if these conceal you from
others, or from yourself, they do not conceal you
from me,
The shaved face, the unsteady eye, the impure com-
plexion, if these balk others, they do not balk
me,
The pert apparel, the deformed attitude, drunken-
ness, greed, premature death, all these I part
aside,
I track through your windings and turnings — I come
upon you where you thought eye should never
come upon you.

8. There is no endowment in man or woman that is not
tallied in you,
There is no virtue, no beauty, in man or woman, but
as good is in you,
No pluck, no endurance in others, but as good is
in you,
No pleasure waiting for others, but an equal pleasure
waits for you.

9. As for me, I give nothing to any one, except I give
the like carefully to you,
I sing the songs of the glory of none, not God, sooner
than I sing the songs of the glory of you.

10. Whoever you are! claim your own at any hazard!
These shows of the east and west are tame compared
to you,
These immense meadows — these interminable rivers
— you are immense and interminable as they,

These furies, elements, storms, motions of Nature,
throes of apparent dissolution — you are he or
she who is master or mistress over them,
Master or mistress in your own right over Nature,
elements, pain, passion, dissolution.

11. The hopples fall from your ankles — you find an unfailing sufficiency,
Old or young, male or female, rude, low, rejected by
the rest, whatever you are promulges itself,
Through birth, life, death, burial, the means are provided, nothing is scanted,
Through angers, losses, ambition, ignorance, ennui,
what you are picks its way.

To a Foiled Revolter or Revoltress.

1. COURAGE! my brother or my sister!
Keep on! Liberty is to be subserved, whatever occurs;
That is nothing, that is quelled by one or two failures,
or any number of failures,
Or by the indifference or ingratitude of the people,
or by any unfaithfulness,
Or the show of the tushes of power — soldiers, cannon,
penal statutes.

2. What we believe in waits latent forever through
Asia, Africa, Europe, North and South America,
Australia, Cuba, and all the islands and archipelagoes of the sea.

3. What we believe in invites no one, promises nothing,
sits in calmness and light, is positive and composed, knows no discouragement,
Waits patiently its time — a year — a century — a hundred centuries.

4. The battle rages with many a loud alarm and frequent advance and retreat,
The infidel triumphs — or supposes he triumphs,
The prison, scaffold, garrote, hand-cuffs, iron necklace and anklet, lead-balls, do their work,
The named and unnamed heroes pass to other spheres,
The great speakers and writers are exiled — they lie sick in distant lands,
The cause is asleep — the strongest throats are still, choked with their own blood,
The young men drop their eyelashes toward the ground when they meet,
But for all this, liberty has not gone out of the place, nor the infidel entered into possession.

5. When liberty goes out of a place, it is not the first to go, nor the second or third to go,
It waits for all the rest to go — it is the last.

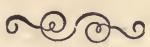
6. When there are no more memories of the superb lovers of the nations of the world,
The superb lovers' names scouted in the public gatherings by the lips of the orators,
Boys not christened after them, but christened after traitors and murderers instead,

Tyrants' and priests' successes really acknowledged anywhere, for all the ostensible appearance,
You or I walking abroad upon the earth, elated at the sight of slaves, no matter who they are,
And when all life, and all the Souls of men and women are discharged from any part of the earth,
Then shall the instinct of liberty be discharged from that part of the earth,
Then shall the infidel and the tyrant come into possession.

7. Then courage!
For till all ceases, neither must you cease.

8. I do not know what you are for, (I do not what I am for myself, nor what any thing is for,)
But I will search carefully for it in being foiled,
In defeat, poverty, imprisonment — for they too are great.

9. Did we think victory great?
So it is — But now it seems to me, when it cannot be helped, that defeat is great,
And that death and dismay are great.



To Him that was Crucified.

My spirit to yours, dear brother,
Do not mind because many, sounding your name, do not understand you,
I do not sound your name, but I understand you, (there are others also;)
I specify you with joy, O my comrade, to salute you, and to salute those who are with you, before and since — and those to come also,
That we all labor together, transmitting the same charge and succession;
We few, equals, indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,
We, enclosers of all continents, all castes — allowers of all theologies,
Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport of men,
We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers, nor any thing that is asserted,
We hear the bawling and din — we are reached at by divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,
They close peremptorily upon us, to surround us, my comrade,
Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down, till we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,
Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers, as we are.

To One shortly To Die.

1. FROM all the rest I single out you, having a message for you:
You are to die — Let others tell you what they please, I cannot prevaricate,
I am exact and merciless, but I love you — There is no escape for you.

2. Softly I lay my right hand upon you — you just feel it,
I do not argue — I bend my head close, and half-envelop it,
I sit quietly by — I remain faithful,
I am more than nurse, more than parent or neighbor,
I absolve you from all except yourself, spiritual, bodily — that is eternal,
(The corpse you will leave will be but excrementitious.)

3. The sun bursts through in unlooked-for directions!
Strong thoughts fill you, and confidence — you smile!
You forget you are sick, as I forget you are sick,
You do not see the medicines — you do not mind the weeping friends — I am with you,
I exclude others from you — there is nothing to be commiserated,
I do not commiserate — I congratulate you.

To a Common Prostitute.

1. Be composed — be at ease with me — I am Walt Whitman, liberal and lusty as Nature,
   Not till the sun excludes you, do I exclude you,
   Not till the waters refuse to glisten for you, and the leaves to rustle for you, do my words refuse to glisten and rustle for you.

2. My girl, I appoint with you an appointment — and I charge you that you make preparation to be worthy to meet me,
   And I charge you that you be patient and perfect till I come.

3. Till then, I salute you with a significant look, that you do not forget me.

To Rich Givers.

What you give me, I cheerfully accept,
A little sustenance, a hut and garden, a little money — these as I rendezvous with my poems,
A traveller's lodging and breakfast as I journey through The States — Why should I be ashamed to own such gifts? Why to advertise for them?
For I myself am not one who bestows nothing upon man and woman,
For I know that what I bestow upon any man or woman is no less than the entrance to all the gifts of the universe.

To a Pupil.

1. Is reform needed? Is it through you?
   The greater the reform needed, the greater the PERSONALITY you need to accomplish it.

2. You! do you not see how it would serve to have eyes, blood, complexion, clean and sweet?
   Do you not see how it would serve to have such a body and Soul, that when you enter the crowd, an atmosphere of desire and command enters with you, and every one is impressed with your personality?

3. O the magnet! the flesh over and over!
   Go, mon cher! if need be, give up all else, and commence to-day to inure yourself to pluck, reality, self-esteem, definiteness, elevatedness,
   Rest not, till you rivet and publish yourself of your own personality.

To The States,

To Identify the 16th, 17th, or 18th Prefidentiad.

WHY reclining, interrogating? Why myself and all drowsing?
What deepening twilight! Scum floating atop of the waters!
Who are they, as bats and night-dogs, askant in the Capitol?

What a filthy Presidentiad! (O south, your torrid suns! O north, your arctic freezings!)
Are those really Congressmen? Are those the great Judges? Is that the President?
Then I will sleep a while yet — for I see that These States sleep, for reasons;
(With gathering murk — with muttering thunder and lambent shoots, we all duly awake,
South, north, east, west, inland and seaboard, we will surely awake.)

To a Cantatrice.

HERE, take this gift!
I was reserving it for some hero, orator, or general,
One who should serve the good old cause, the progress and freedom of the race, the cause of my Soul;
But I see that what I was reserving belongs to you just as much as to any.

Walt Whitman's Caution.

To The States, or any one of them, or any city of The States, *Resist much, obey little*,
Once unquestioning obedience, once fully enslaved,
Once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city, of this earth, ever afterward resumes its liberty.

To a President.

ALL you are doing and saying is to America dangled mirages,
You have not learned of Nature — of the politics of Nature, you have not learned the great amplitude, rectitude, impartiality,
You have not seen that only such as they are for These States,
And that what is less than they, must sooner or later lift off from These States.

To other Lands.

I HEAR you have been asking for something to represent the new race, our self-poised Democracy,
Therefore I send you my poems, that you behold in them what you wanted.

To Old Age.

I SEE in you the estuary that enlarges and spreads itself grandly as it pours in the great sea.

To You.

Let us twain walk aside from the rest;
Now we are together privately, do you discard ceremony,
Come! vouchsafe to me what has yet been vouchsafed to none — Tell me the whole story,
Tell me what you would not tell your brother, wife, husband, or physician.

To You.

Stranger! if you, passing, meet me, and desire to speak to me, why should you not speak to me?
And why should I not speak to you?

MANNAHATTA.

I WAS asking for something specific and perfect for my city, and behold! here is the aboriginal name!

Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane, unruly, musical, self-sufficient,

I see that the word of my city, is that word up there,

Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays, superb, with tall and wonderful spires,

Rich, hemmed thick all around with sailships and steamships — an island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,

Numberless crowded streets — high growths of iron, slender, strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies;

Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, toward sundown,

The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, the larger adjoining islands, the heights, the villas,

The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters, the ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers, well-model'd;

The down-town streets, the jobbers' houses of business — the houses of business of the ship-merchants, and money-brokers — the river-streets,

Immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week,

The carts hauling goods — the manly race of drivers of horses — the brown-faced sailors,

The summer-air, the bright sun shining, and the sailing clouds aloft,

The winter snows, the sleigh-bells — the broken ice in the river, passing along, up or down, with the flood-tide or ebb-tide;

The mechanics of the city, the masters, well-formed, beautiful-faced, looking you straight in the eyes;

Trottoirs thronged — vehicles — Broadway — the women — the shops and shows,

The parades, processions, bugles playing, flags flying, drums beating;

A million people — manners free and superb — open voices — hospitality — the most courageous and friendly young men;

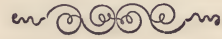
The free city! no slaves! no owners of slaves!

The beautiful city! the city of hurried and sparkling waters! the city of spires and masts!

The city nested in bays! my city!

The city of such women, I am mad to be with them! I will return after death to be with them!

The city of such young men, I swear I cannot live happy, without I often go talk, walk, eat, drink, sleep, with them!



FRANCE,

The 18th Year of Theſe States.

1 A GREAT year and place,
A harsh, discordant, natal scream rising, to touch the mother's heart closer than any yet.

2. I walked the shores of my Eastern Sea,
Heard over the waves the little voice,
Saw the divine infant, where she woke, mournfully wailing, amid the roar of cannon, curses, shouts, crash of falling buildings,
Was not so sick from the blood in the gutters running — nor from the single corpses, nor those in heaps, nor those borne away in the tumbrils,
Was not so desperate at the battues of death — was not so shocked at the repeated fusillades of the guns.

3. Pale, silent, stern, what could I say to that long-accrued retribution?
Could I wish humanity different?
Could I wish the people made of wood and stone?
Or that there be no justice in destiny or time?

4. O Liberty! O mate for me!
Here too keeps the blaze, the bullet and the axe, in reserve, to fetch them out in case of need,
Here too, though long deprest, still is not destroyed,
Here too could rise at last, murdering and extatic,
Here too would demand full arrears of vengeance.

5. Hence I sign this salute over the sea,
And I do not deny that terrible red birth and baptism,
But remember the little voice that I heard wailing — and wait with perfect trust, no matter how long,
And from to-day, sad and cogent, I maintain the bequeath'd cause, as for all lands,
And I send these words to Paris, with my love,
And I guess some chansonniers there will understand them,
For I guess there is latent music yet in France — floods of it,
O I hear already the bustle of instruments — they will soon be drowning all that would interrupt them,
O I think the east wind brings a triumphal and free march,
It reaches hither — it swells me to joyful madness,
I will run transpose it in words, to justify it,
I will yet sing a song for you, ma femme.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

THOUGHTS.

1.

Of the visages of things — And of piercing through to the accepted hells beneath;

Of ugliness — To me there is just as much in it as there is in beauty — And now the ugliness of human beings is acceptable to me;

Of detected persons — To me, detected persons are not, in any respect, worse than undetected persons — and are not in any respect worse than I am myself;

Of criminals — To me, any judge, or any juror, is equally criminal — and any reputable person is also — and the President is also.

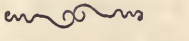
2.

Of waters, forests, hills,

Of the earth at large, whispering through medium of me;

Of vista — Suppose some sight in arriere, through the formative chaos, presuming the growth, fulness, life, now attained on the journey;

(But I see the road continued, and the journey ever continued ;)
Of what was once lacking on the earth, and in due time has become supplied — And of what will yet be supplied,
Because all I see and know, I believe to have purport in what will yet be supplied.



3.

Of persons arrived at high positions, ceremonies, wealth, scholarships, and the like,
To me, all that those persons have arrived at, sinks away from them, except as it results to their bodies and Souls,
So that often to me they appear gaunt and naked,
And often, to me, each one mocks the others, and mocks himself or herself,
And of each one, the core of life, namely happiness, is full of the rotten excrement of maggots,
And often, to me, those men and women pass unwittingly the true realities of life, and go toward false realities,
And often, to me, they are alive after what custom has served them, but nothing more,
And often, to me, they are sad, hasty, unwaked somnambules, walking the dusk.

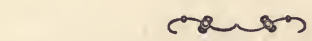
4.

Of ownership — As if one fit to own things could not at pleasure enter upon all, and incorporate them into himself or herself;
Of Equality — As if it harmed me, giving others the same chances and rights as myself — As if it were not indispensable to my own rights that others possess the same;
Of Justice — As if Justice could be any thing but the same ample law, expounded by natural judges and saviours,
As if it might be this thing or that thing, according to decisions.

5.

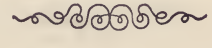
As I sit with others, at a great feast, suddenly, while the music is playing,
To my mind, (whence it comes I know not,) spectral, in mist, of a wreck at sea,
Of the flower of the marine science of fifty generations, foundered off the Northeast coast, and going down — Of the steamship Arctic going down,
Of the veiled tableau — Women gathered together on deck, pale, heroic, waiting the moment that draws so close — O the moment!

O the huge sob — A few bubbles — the white foam
spirting up — And then the women gone,
Sinking there, while the passionless wet flows on —
And I now pondering, Are those women indeed
gone ?
Are Souls drowned and destroyed so ?
Is only matter triumphant ?



6.

OF what I write from myself — As if that were not
the resumé ;
Of Histories — As if such, however complete, were
not less complete than my poems ;
As if the shreds, the records of nations, could possibly
be as lasting as my poems ;
As if here were not the amount of all nations, and of
all the lives of heroes.



7.

OF obedience, faith, adhesiveness ;
As I stand aloof and look, there is to me something
profoundly affecting in large masses of men, following the lead of those who do not believe in
men.

UNNAMED LANDS.

1. Nations ten thousand years before These States, and many times ten thousand years before These States,
Garnered clusters of ages, that men and women like us grew up and travelled their course, and passed on;
What vast-built cities — What orderly republics — What pastoral tribes and nomads,
What histories, rulers, heroes, perhaps transcending all others,
What laws, customs, wealth, arts, traditions,
What sort of marriage — What costumes — What physiology and phrenology,
What of liberty and slavery among them — What they thought of death and the Soul,
Who were witty and wise — Who beautiful and poetic — Who brutish and undeveloped,
Not a mark, not a record remains — And yet all remains.

2. O I know that those men and women were not for nothing, any more than we are for nothing,

I know that they belong to the scheme of the world every bit as much as we now belong to it, and as all will henceforth belong to it.

3. Afar they stand — yet near to me they stand,
Some with oval countenances, learned and calm,
Some naked and savage — Some like huge collections of insects,
Some in tents — herdsmen, patriarchs, tribes, horsemen,
Some prowling through woods — Some living peaceably on farms, laboring, reaping, filling barns,
Some traversing paved avenues, amid temples, palaces, factories, libraries, shows, courts, theatres, wonderful monuments.

4. Are those billions of men really gone?
Are those women of the old experience of the earth gone?
Do their lives, cities, arts, rest only with us?
Did they achieve nothing for good, for themselves?

5. I believe of all those billions of men and women that filled the unnamed lands, every one exists this hour, here or elsewhere, invisible to us, in exact proportion to what he or she grew from in life, and out of what he or she did, felt, became, loved, sinned, in life.

6. I believe that was not the end of those nations, or any person of them, any more than this shall be the end of my nation, or of me;

Of their languages, phrenology, government, coins, medals, marriage, literature, products, games, jurisprudence, wars, manners, amativeness, crimes, prisons, slaves, heroes, poets, I suspect their results curiously await in the yet unseen world — counterparts of what accrued to them in the seen world,

I suspect I shall meet them there,

I suspect I shall there find each old particular of those unnamed lands.

KOSMOS.

WHO includes diversity, and is Nature,

Who is the amplitude of the earth, and the coarseness and sexuality of the earth, and the great charity of the earth, and the equilibrium also,

Who has not looked forth from the windows, the eyes, for nothing, or whose brain held audience with messengers for nothing;

Who contains believers and disbelievers — Who is the most majestic lover;

Who holds duly his or her triune proportion of realism, spiritualism, and of the æsthetic, or intellectual,

Who, having considered the body, finds all its organs and parts good;

Who, out of the theory of the earth, and of his or her body, understands by subtle analogies, the theory of a city, a poem, and of the large politics of These States;

Who believes not only in our globe, with its sun and moon, but in other globes, with their suns and moons;
Who, constructing the house of himself or herself, not for a day, but for all time, sees races, eras, dates, generations,
The past, the future, dwelling there, like space, inseparable together.

A HAND-MIRROR.

HOLD it up sternly! See this it sends back! (Who is it? Is it you?)
Outside fair costume — within, ashes and filth,
No more a flashing eye — no more a sonorous voice or springy step,
Now some slave's eye, voice, hands, step,
A drunkard's breath, unwholesome eater's face, venerealee's flesh,
Lungs rotting away piecemeal, stomach sour and cankerous,
Joints rheumatic, bowels clogged with abomination,
Blood circulating dark and poisonous streams,
Words babble, hearing and touch callous,
No brain, no heart left — no magnetism of sex;
Such, from one look in this looking-glass ere you go hence,
Such a result so soon — and from such a beginning!

BEGINNERS.

How they are provided for upon the earth, (appearing at intervals,)
How dear and dreadful they are to the earth,
How they inure to themselves as much as to any — What a paradox appears, their age,
How people respond to them, yet know them not,
How there is something relentless in their fate, all times,
How all times mischoose the objects of their adulation and reward,
And how the same inexorable price must still be paid for the same great purchase.

TESTS.

ALL submit to them, where they sit, inner, secure, unapproachable to analysis, in the Soul;
Not traditions — not the outer authorities are the judges — they are the judges of outer authorities, and of all traditions,
They corroborate as they go, only whatever corroborates themselves, and touches themselves,
For all that, they have it forever in themselves to corroborate far and near, without one exception.

SAVANTISM.

THITHER, as I look, I see each result and glory retracing itself and nestling close, always obligated;
Thither hours, months, years — thither trades, compacts, establishments, even the most minute,
Thither every-day life, speech, utensils, politics, persons, estates,
Thither we also, I with my leaves and songs, trustful, admirant,
As a father, to his father going, takes his children along with him.

PERFECTIONS.

ONLY themselves understand themselves, and the like of themselves,
As Souls only understand Souls.

SAYS.

1.

I SAY whatever tastes sweet to the most perfect person, that is finally right.

2.

I SAY nourish a great intellect, a great brain;
If I have said anything to the contrary, I hereby retract it.

3.

I SAY man shall not hold property in man;
I say the least developed person on earth is just as important and sacred to himself or herself, as the most developed person is to himself or herself.

4.

I SAY where liberty draws not the blood out of slavery, there slavery draws the blood out of liberty,
I say the word of the good old cause in These States, and resound it hence over the world.

5.

I SAY the human shape or face is so great, it must never be made ridiculous;
I say for ornaments nothing outre can be allowed,
And that anything is most beautiful without ornament,
And that exaggerations will be sternly revenged in your own physiology, and in other persons' physiology also;
And I say that clean-shaped children can be jetted and conceived only where natural forms prevail in public, and the human face and form are never caricatured;
And I say that genius need never more be turned to romances,
(For facts properly told, how mean appear all romances.)

6.

I SAY the word of lands fearing nothing — I will have no other land;
I say discuss all and expose all — I am for every topic openly;
I say there can be no salvation for These States without innovators — without free tongues, and ears willing to hear the tongues;
And I announce as a glory of These States, that they respectfully listen to propositions, reforms, fresh views and doctrines, from successions of men and women,
Each age with its own growth.

7.

I HAVE said many times that materials and the Soul
are great, and that all depends on physique;
Now I reverse what I said, and affirm that all depends
on the æsthetic or intellectual,
And that criticism is great — and that refinement is
greatest of all;
And I affirm now that the mind governs — and that
all depends on the mind.

8.

WITH one man or woman — (no matter which one —
I even pick out the lowest,)
With him or her I now illustrate the whole law;
I say that every right, in politics or what-not, shall be
eligible to that one man or woman, on the same
terms as any.

DEBRIS.

He is wisest who has the most caution,
He only wins who goes far enough.

Any thing is as good as established, when that is established that will produce it and continue it.

What General has a good army in himself, has a good army;
He happy in himself, or she happy in herself, is happy,
But I tell you you cannot be happy by others, any more than you can beget or conceive a child by others.

Have you learned lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you?
Have you not learned the great lessons of those who rejected you, and braced themselves against you? or who treated you with contempt, or disputed the passage with you?
Have you had no practice to receive opponents when they come?

DESPAIRING cries float ceaselessly toward me, day and night,
The sad voice of Death — the call of my nearest lover, putting forth, alarmed, uncertain,
This sea I am quickly to sail, come tell me,
Come tell me where I am speeding — tell me my destination.

I UNDERSTAND your anguish, but I cannot help you,
I approach, hear, behold — the sad mouth, the look out of the eyes, your mute inquiry,
Whither I go from the bed I now recline on, come tell me;
Old age, alarmed, uncertain — A young woman's voice appealing to me, for comfort,
A young man's voice, *Shall I not escape?*

A THOUSAND perfect men and women appear,
Around each gathers a cluster of friends, and gay children and youths, with offerings.

A MASK — a perpetual natural disguiser of herself,
Concealing her face, concealing her form,
Changes and transformations every hour, every moment,
Falling upon her even when she sleeps.

One sweeps by, attended by an immense train,
All emblematic of peace — not a soldier or menial among them.

One sweeps by, old, with black eyes, and profuse white hair,
He has the simple magnificence of health and strength,
His face strikes as with flashes of lightning whoever it turns toward.

Three old men slowly pass, followed by three others, and they by three others,
They are beautiful — the one in the middle of each group holds his companions by the hand,
As they walk, they give out perfume wherever they walk.

Women sit, or move to and fro — some old, some young,
The young are beautiful — but the old are more beautiful than the young.

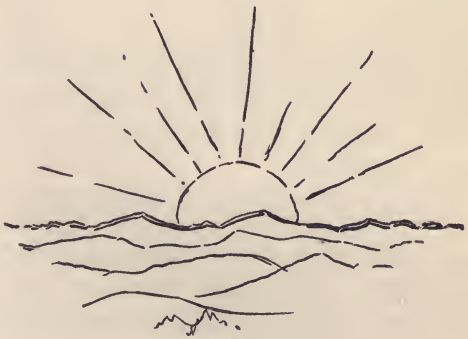
What weeping face is that looking from the window?
Why does it stream those sorrowful tears?
Is it for some burial place, vast and dry?
Is it to wet the soil of graves?

I WILL take an egg out of the robin's nest in the orchard,
I will take a branch of gooseberries from the old bush in the garden, and go and preach to the world;
You shall see I will not meet a single heretic or scorner,
You shall see how I stump clergymen, and confound them,
You shall see me showing a scarlet tomato, and a white pebble from the beach.

BEHAVIOR — fresh, native, copious, each one for himself or herself,
Nature and the Soul expressed — America and freedom expressed — In it the finest art,
In it pride, cleanliness, sympathy, to have their chance,
In it physique, intellect, faith — in it just as much as to manage an army or a city, or to write a book — perhaps more,
The youth, the laboring person, the poor person, rivalling all the rest — perhaps outdoing the rest,
The effects of the universe no greater than its;
For there is nothing in the whole universe that can be more effective than a man's or woman's daily behavior can be,
In any position, in any one of These States.

NOT the pilot has charged himself to bring his ship into port, though beaten back, and many times baffled,
Not the path-finder, penetrating inland, weary and long,
By deserts parched, snows chilled, rivers wet, perseveres till he reaches his destination,
More than I have charged myself, heeded or unheeded, to compose a free march for These States,
To be exhilarating music to them, years, centuries hence.

I THOUGHT I was not alone, walking here by the shore,
But the one I thought was with me, as now I walk by the shore,
As I lean and look through the glimmering light — that one has utterly disappeared,
And those appear that perplex me.



SLEEP-CHASINGS.

1. I WANDER all night in my vision,
Stepping with light feet, swiftly and noiselessly stepping and stopping,
Bending with open eyes over the shut eyes of sleepers,
Wandering and confused, lost to myself, ill-assorted, contradictory,
Pausing, gazing, bending, and stopping.

2. How solemn they look there, stretched and still!
How quiet they breathe, the little children in their cradles!

3. The wretched features of ennuyés, the white features of corpses, the livid faces of drunkards, the sick-gray faces of onanists,
The gashed bodies on battle-fields, the insane in their strong-doored rooms, the sacred idiots, the new-born emerging from gates, and the dying emerging from gates,
The night pervades them and infolds them.

4. The married couple sleep calmly in their bed — he with his palm on the hip of the wife, and she with her palm on the hip of the husband,

The sisters sleep lovingly side by side in their bed,
The men sleep lovingly side by side in theirs,
And the mother sleeps, with her little child carefully wrapped.

5. The blind sleep, and the deaf and dumb sleep,
The prisoner sleeps well in the prison — the runaway son sleeps,
The murderer that is to be hung next day — how does he sleep?
And the murdered person — how does he sleep?

6. The female that loves unrequited sleeps,
And the male that loves unrequited sleeps,
The head of the money-maker that plotted all day sleeps,
And the enraged and treacherous dispositions — all, all sleep.

7. I stand in the dark with drooping eyes by the worst-suffering and the most restless,
I pass my hands soothingly to and fro a few inches from them,
The restless sink in their beds — they fitfully sleep.

8. Now I pierce the darkness — new beings appear,
The earth recedes from me into the night,
I saw that it was beautiful, and I see that what is not the earth is beautiful.

9. I go from bedside to bedside — I sleep close with the other sleepers, each in turn,
I dream in my dream all the dreams of the other dreamers,
And I become the other dreamers.

10. I am a dance — Play up, there! the fit is whirling me fast!

11. I am the ever-laughing — it is new moon and twilight,
I see the hiding of douceurs — I see nimble ghosts whichever way I look,
Cache, and cache again, deep in the ground and sea, and where it is neither ground or sea.

12. Well do they do their jobs, those journeymen divine,
Only from me can they hide nothing, and would not if they could,
I reckon I am their boss, and they make me a pet besides,
And surround me and lead me, and run ahead when I walk,
To lift their cunning covers, to signify me with stretched arms, and resume the way;
Onward we move! a gay gang of blackguards! with mirth-shouting music and wild-flapping pennants of joy!

13. I am the actor, the actress, the voter, the politician,
The emigrant and the exile, the criminal that stood in the box,
He who has been famous, and he who shall be famous after to-day,
The stammerer, the well-formed person, the wasted or feeble person.

14. I am she who adorned herself and folded her hair expectantly,
My truant lover has come, and it is dark.

15. Double yourself and receive me, darkness!
Receive me and my lover too — he will not let me go without him.

16. I roll myself upon you, as upon a bed — I resign myself to the dusk.

17. He whom I call answers me and takes the place of my lover,
He rises with me silently from the bed.

18. Darkness! you are gentler than my lover — his flesh was sweaty and panting,
I feel the hot moisture yet that he left me.

19. My hands are spread forth, I pass them in all directions,
I would sound up the shadowy shore to which you are journeying.

20. Be careful, darkness! already, what was it touched me?
I thought my lover had gone, else darkness and he are one,
I hear the heart-beat — I follow, I fade away.

21. O hot-cheeked and blushing! O foolish hectic!
O for pity's sake, no one must see me now! my clothes were stolen while I was abed,
Now I am thrust forth, where shall I run?

22. Pier that I saw dimly last night, when I looked from the windows!

Pier out from the main, let me catch myself with you and stay — I will not chafe you,
I feel ashamed to go naked about the world.

23. I am curious to know where my feet stand — and what this is flooding me, childhood or manhood — and the hunger that crosses the bridge between.

24. The cloth laps a first sweet eating and drinking,
Laps life-swelling yolks — laps ear of rose-corn, milky and just ripened;
The white teeth stay, and the boss-tooth advances in darkness,
And liquor is spilled on lips and bosoms by touching glasses, and the best liquor afterward.

25. I descend my western course, my sinews are flaccid,
Perfume and youth course through me, and I am their wake.

26. It is my face yellow and wrinkled, instead of the old woman's,
I sit low in a straw-bottom chair, and carefully darn my grandson's stockings.

27. It is I too, the sleepless widow looking out on the winter midnight,
I see the sparkles of starshine on the icy and pallid earth.

28. A shroud I see, and I am the shroud — I wrap a body and lie in the coffin,

It is dark here under ground — it is not evil or pain here — it is blank here, for reasons.

29. It seems to me that everything in the light and air ought to be happy,
Whoever is not in his coffin and the dark grave, let him know he has enough.

30. I see a beautiful gigantic swimmer swimming naked through the eddies of the sea,
His brown hair lies close and even to his head — he strikes out with courageous arms — he urges himself with his legs,
I see his white body — I see his undaunted eyes,
I hate the swift-running eddies that would dash him head-foremost on the rocks.

31. What are you doing, you ruffianly red-trickled waves?
Will you kill the courageous giant? Will you kill him in the prime of his middle age?

32. Steady and long he struggles,
He is baffled, banged, bruised — he holds out while his strength holds out,
The slapping eddies are spotted with his blood — they bear him away — they roll him, swing him, turn him,
His beautiful body is borne in the circling eddies, it is continually bruised on rocks,
Swiftly and out of sight is borne the brave corpse.

33. I turn, but do not extricate myself,
Confused, a past-reading, another, but with darkness yet.

34. The beach is cut by the razory ice-wind — the wreck-guns sound,
The tempest lulls — the moon comes floundering through the drifts.

35. I look where the ship helplessly heads end on — I hear the burst as she strikes — I hear the howls of dismay — they grow fainter and fainter.

36. I cannot aid with my wringing fingers,
I can but rush to the surf, and let it drench me and freeze upon me.

37. I search with the crowd — not one of the company is washed to us alive;
In the morning I help pick up the dead and lay them in rows in a barn.

38. Now of the old war-days, the defeat at Brooklyn,
Washington stands inside the lines — he stands on the intrenched hills, amid a crowd of officers,
His face is cold and damp — he cannot repress the weeping drops,
He lifts the glass perpetually to his eyes — the color is blanched from his cheeks,
He sees the slaughter of the southern braves confided to him by their parents.

39. The same, at last and at last, when peace is declared,
He stands in the room of the old tavern — the well-beloved soldiers all pass through,
The officers speechless and slow draw near in their turns,

The chief encircles their necks with his arm, and kisses them on the cheek,
He kisses lightly the wet cheeks one after another — he shakes hands, and bids good-by to the army.

40. Now I tell what my mother told me to-day as we sat at dinner together,
Of when she was a nearly grown girl, living home with her parents on the old homestead.

41. A red squaw came one breakfast-time to the old homestead,
On her back she carried a bundle of rushes for rush-bottoming chairs,
Her hair, straight, shiny, coarse, black, profuse, half-enveloped her face,
Her step was free and elastic, and her voice sounded exquisitely as she spoke.

42. My mother looked in delight and amazement at the stranger,
She looked at the freshness of her tall-borne face, and full and pliant limbs,
The more she looked upon her she loved her,
Never before had she seen such wonderful beauty and purity,
She made her sit on a bench by the jamb of the fire-place — she cooked food for her,
She had no work to give her, but she gave her remembrance and fondness.

43. The red squaw staid all the forenoon, and toward the middle of the afternoon she went away,

O my mother was loth to have her go away!
All the week she thought of her — she watched for her many a month,
She remembered her many a winter and many a summer,
But the red squaw never came, nor was heard of there again.

44. Now Lucifer was not dead — or if he was, I am his sorrowful terrible heir,
I have been wronged — I am oppressed — I hate him that oppresses me,
I will either destroy him, or he shall release me.

45. Damn him! how he does defile me!
How he informs against my brother and sister, and takes pay for their blood!
How he laughs when I look down the bend, after the steamboat that carries away my woman!

46. Now the vast dusk bulk that is the whale's bulk, it seems mine,
Warily, sportsman! though I lie so sleepy and sluggish, my tap is death.

47. A show of the summer softness! a contact of something unseen! an amour of the light and air!
I am jealous, and overwhelmed with friendliness,
And will go gallivant with the light and air myself,
And have an unseen something to be in contact with them also.

48. O love and summer! you are in the dreams, and in me!

Autumn and winter are in the dreams — the farmer goes with his thrift,
The droves and crops increase, and the barns are well-filled.

49. Elements merge in the night — ships make tacks in the dreams,
The sailor sails — the exile returns home,
The fugitive returns unharmed — the immigrant is back beyond months and years,
The poor Irishman lives in the simple house of his childhood, with the well-known neighbors and faces,
They warmly welcome him — he is barefoot again, he forgets he is well off;
The Dutchman voyages home, and the Scotchman and Welshman voyage home, and the native of the Mediterranean voyages home,
To every port of England, France, Spain, enter well-filled ships,
The Swiss foots it toward his hills — the Prussian goes his way, the Hungarian his way, and the Pole his way,
The Swede returns, and the Dane and Norwegian return.

50. The homeward bound, and the outward bound,
The beautiful lost swimmer, the ennuyé, the onanist, the female that loves unrequited, the money-maker,
The actor and actress, those through with their parts, and those waiting to commence,

The affectionate boy, the husband and wife, the voter, the nominee that is chosen, and the nominee that has failed,
The great already known, and the great any time after to-day,
The stammerer, the sick, the perfect-formed, the homely,
The criminal that stood in the box, the judge that sat and sentenced him, the fluent lawyers, the jury, the audience,
The laugher and weeper, the dancer, the midnight widow, the red squaw,
The consumptive, the erysipelite, the idiot, he that is wronged,
The antipodes, and every one between this and them in the dark,
I swear they are averaged now — one is no better than the other,
The night and sleep have likened them and restored them.

51 I swear they are all beautiful!
Every one that sleeps is beautiful — everything in the dim light is beautiful,
The wildest and bloodiest is over, and all is peace.

52. Peace is always beautiful,
The myth of heaven indicates peace and night.

53. The myth of heaven indicates the Soul;
The Soul is always beautiful — it appears more or it appears less — it comes, or it lags behind,

It comes from its embowered garden, and looks pleasantly on itself, and encloses the world,
Perfect and clean the genitals previously jetting, and perfect and clean the womb cohering,
The head well-grown, proportioned and plumb, and the bowels and joints proportioned and plumb.

64. The Soul is always beautiful,
The universe is duly in order, everything is in its place,
What is arrived is in its place, and what waits is in its place;
The twisted skull waits, the watery or rotten blood waits,
The child of the glutton or venerealee waits long, and the child of the drunkard waits long, and the drunkard himself waits long,
The sleepers that lived and died wait — the far advanced are to go on in their turns, and the far behind are to go on in their turns,
The diverse shall be no less diverse, but they shall flow and unite — they unite now.

65. The sleepers are very beautiful as they lie unclothed,
They flow hand in hand over the whole earth, from east to west, as they lie unclothed,
The Asiatic and African are hand in hand — the European and American are hand in hand,
Learned and unlearned are hand in hand, and male and female are hand in hand,
The bare arm of the girl crosses the bare breast of her lover — they press close without lust — his lips press her neck,

The father holds his grown or ungrown son in his arms with measureless love, and the son holds the father in his arms with measureless love,
The white hair of the mother shines on the white wrist of the daughter,
The breath of the boy goes with the breath of the man, friend is inarmed by friend,
The scholar kisses the teacher, and the teacher kisses the scholar — the wronged is made right,
The call of the slave is one with the master's call, and the master salutes the slave,
The felon steps forth from the prison — the insane becomes sane — the suffering of sick persons is relieved,
The sweatings and fevers stop — the throat that was unsound is sound — the lungs of the consumptive are resumed — the poor distressed head is free,
The joints of the rheumatic move as smoothly as ever, and smoother than ever,
Stiflings and passages open — the paralyzed become supple,
The swelled and convulsed and congested awake to themselves in condition,
They pass the invigoration of the night, and the chemistry of the night, and awake.

56. I too pass from the night,
I stay a while away O night, but I return to you again, and love you.

57. Why should I be afraid to trust myself to you?
I am not afraid — I have been well brought forward by you,

I love the rich running day, but I do not desert her
in whom I lay so long,
I know not how I came of you, and I know not where
I go with you — but I know I came well, and
shall go well.

58. I will stop only a time with the night, and rise
betimes,
I will duly pass the day, O my mother, and duly
return to you.

BURIAL.

1. To think of it!
   To think of time — of all that retrospection!
   To think of to-day, and the ages continued henceforward!

2. Have you guessed you yourself would not continue?
   Have you dreaded those earth-beetles?
   Have you feared the future would be nothing to you?

3. Is to-day nothing? Is the beginningless past nothing?
   If the future is nothing, they are just as surely nothing.

4. To think that the sun rose in the east! that men and women were flexible, real, alive! that everything was alive!
   To think that you and I did not see, feel, think, nor bear our part!
   To think that we are now here, and bear our part!

5. Not a day passes — not a minute or second, without an accouchment!
   Not a day passes — not a minute or second, without a corpse!

6. The dull nights go over, and the dull days also,
   The soreness of lying so much in bed goes over,

The physician, after long putting off, gives the silent and terrible look for an answer,
The children come hurried and weeping, and the brothers and sisters are sent for,
Medicines stand unused on the shelf — (the camphor-smell has long pervaded the rooms,)
The faithful hand of the living does not desert the hand of the dying,
The twitching lips press lightly on the forehead of the dying,
The breath ceases, and the pulse of the heart ceases,
The corpse stretches on the bed, and the living look upon it,
It is palpable as the living are palpable.

7. The living look upon the corpse with their eye-sight,
But without eye-sight lingers a different living, and looks curiously on the corpse.

8. To think that the rivers will flow, and the snow fall, and fruits ripen, and act upon others as upon us now — yet not act upon us!
To think of all these wonders of city and country, and others taking great interest in them — and we taking no interest in them!

9. To think how eager we are in building our houses!
To think others shall be just as eager, and we quite indifferent!

10. I see one building the house that serves him a few years, or seventy or eighty years at most,
I see one building the house that serves him longer than that.

11. Slow-moving and black lines creep over the whole earth — they never cease — they are the burial lines,
He that was President was buried, and he that is now President shall surely be buried.

12. Cold dash of waves at the ferry-wharf — posh and ice in the river, half-frozen mud in the streets, a gray discouraged sky overhead, the short last daylight of Twelfth Month,
A hearse and stages — other vehicles give place — the funeral of an old Broadway stage-driver, the cortege mostly drivers.

13. Steady the trot to the cemetery, duly rattles the death-bell, the gate is passed, the new-dug grave is halted at, the living alight, the hearse uncloses,
The coffin is passed out, lowered and settled, the whip is laid on the coffin, the earth is swiftly shovelled in,
The mound above is flatted with the spades — silence,
A minute, no one moves or speaks — it is done,
He is decently put away — is there anything more?

14. He was a good fellow, free-mouthed, quick-tempered, not bad-looking, able to take his own part, witty, sensitive to a slight, ready with life or death for a friend, fond of women, gambled, ate hearty, drank hearty, had known what it was to be flush, grew low-spirited toward the last, sickened, was helped by a contribution, died, aged forty-one years — and that was his funeral.

15 Thumb extended, finger uplifted, apron, cape, gloves, strap, wet-weather clothes, whip carefully chosen, boss, spotter, starter, hostler, somebody loafing on you, you loafing on somebody, head-way, man before and man behind, good day's work, bad day's work, pet stock, mean stock, first out, last out, turning in at night,

To think that these are so much and so nigh to other drivers — and he there takes no interest in them!

16. The markets, the government, the working-man's wages — to think what account they are through our nights and days!

To think that other working-men will make just as great account of them — yet we make little or no account!

17. The vulgar and the refined — what you call sin and what you call goodness — to think how wide a difference!

To think the difference will still continue to others, yet we lie beyond the difference.

18. To think how much pleasure there is!

Have you pleasure from looking at the sky? have you pleasure from poems?

Do you enjoy yourself in the city? or engaged in business? or planning a nomination and election? or with your wife and family?

Or with your mother and sisters? or in womanly house-work? or the beautiful maternal cares?

These also flow onward to others — you and I flow onward,

But in due time you and I shall take less interest in them.

19. Your farm, profits, crops, — to think how engrossed you are!
To think there will still be farms, profits, crops — yet for you, of what avail?

20. What will be, will be well — for what is, is well,
To take interest is well, and not to take interest shall be well.

21. The sky continues beautiful,
The pleasure of men with women shall never be sated, nor the pleasure of women with men, nor the pleasure from poems,
The domestic joys, the daily house-work or business, the building of houses — these are not phantasms — they have weight, form, location;
Farms, profits, crops, markets, wages, government, are none of them phantasms,
The difference between sin and goodness is no delusion,
The earth is not an echo — man and his life, and all the things of his life, are well-considered.

22. You are not thrown to the winds — you gather certainly and safely around yourself,
Yourself! Yourself! Yourself, forever and ever!

23. It is not to diffuse you that you were born of your mother and father — it is to identify you,
It is not that you should be undecided, but that you should be decided;

Something long preparing and formless is arrived and formed in you,
You are thenceforth secure, whatever comes or goes.

24. The threads that were spun are gathered, the weft crosses the warp, the pattern is systematic.

25. The preparations have every one been justified,
The orchestra have sufficiently tuned their instruments, the baton has given the signal.

26. The guest that was coming — he waited long, for reasons — he is now housed,
He is one of those who are beautiful and happy — he is one of those that to look upon and be with is enough.

27. The law of the past cannot be eluded,
The law of the present and future cannot be eluded,
The law of the living cannot be eluded — it is eternal,
The law of promotion and transformation cannot be eluded,
The law of heroes and good-doers cannot be eluded,
The law of drunkards, informers, mean persons — not one iota of it can be eluded.

28. Slow-moving and black lines go ceaselessly over the earth,
Northerner goes carried, and southerner goes carried, and they on the Atlantic side, and they on the Pacific, and they between, and all through the Mississippi country, and all over the earth.

29. The great masters and kosmos are well as they go — the heroes and good-doers are well,
The known leaders and inventors, and the rich owners and pious and distinguished, may be well,
But there is more account than that — there is strict account of all.

30. The interminable hordes of the ignorant and wicked are not nothing,
The barbarians of Africa and Asia are not nothing,
The common people of Europe are not nothing — the American aborigines are not nothing,
The infected in the immigrant hospital are not nothing — the murderer or mean person is not nothing,
The perpetual successions of shallow people are not nothing as they go,
The lowest prostitute is not nothing — the mocker of religion is not nothing as he goes.

31. I shall go with the rest — we have satisfaction,
I have dreamed that we are not to be changed so much, nor the law of us changed,
I have dreamed that heroes and good-doers shall be under the present and past law,
And that murderers, drunkards, liars, shall be under the present and past law,
For I have dreamed that the law they are under now is enough.

32. And I have dreamed that the satisfaction is not so much changed, and that there is no life without satisfaction;
What is the earth? what are body and Soul, without satisfaction?

33. I shall go with the rest,
We cannot be stopped at a given point — that is no satisfaction,
To show us a good thing, or a few good things, for a space of time — that is no satisfaction,
We must have the indestructible breed of the best, regardless of time.

34. If otherwise, all these things came but to ashes of dung,
If maggots and rats ended us, then alarm! for we are betrayed!
Then indeed suspicion of death.

35. Do you suspect death? If I were to suspect death, I should die now,
Do you think I could walk pleasantly and well-suited toward annihilation?

36. Pleasantly and well-suited I walk,
Whither I walk I cannot define, but I know it is good,
The whole universe indicates that it is good,
The past and the present indicate that it is good.

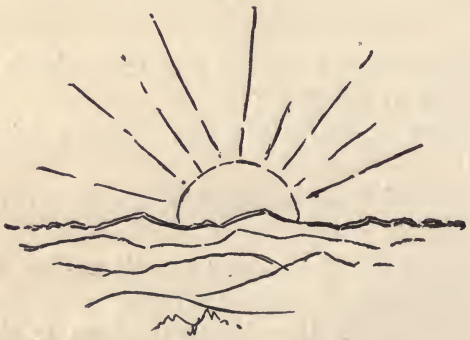
37. How beautiful and perfect are the animals! How perfect is my Soul!
How perfect the earth, and the minutest thing upon it!
What is called good is perfect, and what is called bad is just as perfect,
The vegetables and minerals are all perfect, and the imponderable fluids are perfect;
Slowly and surely they have passed on to this, and slowly and surely they yet pass on.

38. My Soul! if I realize you, I have satisfaction,
Animals and vegetables! if I realize you, I have satisfaction,
Laws of the earth and air! if I realize you, I have satisfaction.

39. I cannot define my satisfaction, yet it is so,
I cannot define my life, yet it is so.

40. O it comes to me now!
I swear I think now that everything without exception has an eternal Soul!
The trees have, rooted in the ground! the weeds of the sea have! the animals!

41. I swear I think there is nothing but immortality!
That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float is for it, and the cohering is for it!
And all preparation is for it! and identity is for it! and life and death are altogether for it!



TO MY SOUL.

1. As nearing departure,
As the time draws nigh, glooming from you,
A cloud — a dread beyond, of I know not what, darkens me.

2. I shall go forth,
I shall traverse The States — but I cannot tell whither or how long;
Perhaps soon, some day or night while I am singing, my voice will suddenly cease.

3. O Soul!
Then all may arrive to but this;
The glances of my eyes, that swept the daylight,
The unspeakable love I interchanged with women,
My joys in the open air — my walks through the Mannahatta,
The continual good will I have met — the curious attachment of young men to me,
My reflections alone — the absorption into me from the landscape, stars, animals, thunder, rain, and snow, in my wanderings alone,
The words of my mouth, rude, ignorant, arrogant — my many faults and derelictions,

The light touches, on my lips, of the lips of my comrades, at parting,
The tracks which I leave, upon the side-walks and fields,
May but arrive at this beginning of me,
This beginning of me — and yet it is enough, O Soul,
O Soul, we have positively appeared — that is enough.

So long!

1. To conclude — I announce what comes after me,
   The thought must be promulged, that all I know at any time suffices for that time only — not subsequent time;
   I announce greater offspring, orators, days, and then depart.

2. I remember I said to myself at the winter-close, before my leaves sprang at all, that I would become a candid and unloosed summer-poet,
   I said I would raise my voice jocund and strong, with reference to consummations.

3. When America does what was promised,
   When each part is peopled with free people,
   When there is no city on earth to lead my city, the city of young men, the Mannahatta city — But when the Mannahatta leads all the cities of the earth,
   When there are plentiful athletic bards, inland and seaboard,
   When through These States walk a hundred millions of superb persons,
   When the rest part away for superb persons, and contribute to them,

When fathers, firm, unconstrained, open-eyed — When breeds of the most perfect mothers denote America,
Then to me ripeness and conclusion.

4. Yet not me, after all — let none be content with me,
I myself seek a man better than I am, or a woman better than I am,
I invite defiance, and to make myself superseded,
All I have done, I would cheerfully give to be trod under foot, if it might only be the soil of superior poems.

5. I have established nothing for good,
I have but established these things, till things farther onward shall be prepared to be established,
And I am myself the preparer of things farther onward.

6. I have pressed through in my own right,
I have offered my style to every one — I have journeyed with confident step,
While my pleasure is yet at the full, I whisper *So long*,
And take the young woman's hand, and the young man's hand, for the last time.

7. Once more I enforce you to give play to yourself — and not depend on me, or on any one but yourself,
Once more I proclaim the whole of America for each individual, without exception.

8. As I have announced the true theory of the youth, manhood, womanhood, of The States, I adhere to it;
As I have announced myself on immortality, the body, procreation, hauteur, prudence,
As I joined the stern crowd that still confronts the President with menacing weapons — I adhere to all,
As I have announced each age for itself, this moment I set the example.

9. I demand the choicest edifices to destroy them;
Room! room! for new far-planning draughtsmen and engineers!
Clear that rubbish from the building-spots and the paths!

10. *So long!*
I announce natural persons to arise,
I announce justice triumphant,
I announce uncompromising liberty and equality,
I announce the justification of candor, and the justification of pride.

11. I announce that the identity of These States is a single identity only,
I announce the Union more and more compact,
I announce splendors and majesties to make all the previous politics of the earth insignificant.

12. I announce adhesiveness — I say it shall be limitless, unloosened,

I say you shall yet find the friend you was looking for.

13. *So long!*
I announce a man or woman coming — perhaps you are the one,
I announce a great individual, fluid as Nature, chaste, affectionate, compassionate, fully armed.

14. *So long!*
I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement, spiritual, bold,
And I announce an old age that shall lightly and joyfully meet its translation.

15 O thicker and faster!
O crowding too close upon me!
I foresee too much — it means more than I thought,
It appears to me I am dying.

16 Now throat, sound your last!
Salute me — salute the future once more. Peal the old cry once more.

17 Screaming electric, the atmosphere using,
At random glancing, each as I notice absorbing,
Swiftly on, but a little while alighting,
Curious enveloped messages delivering,
Sparkles hot, seed ethereal, down in the dirt dropping,
Myself unknowing, my commission obeying, to question it never daring,
To ages, and ages yet, the growth of the seed leaving,

To troops out of me rising — they the tasks I have set promulging,
To women certain whispers of myself bequeathing — their affection me more clearly explaining,
To young men my problems offering — no dallier I — I the muscle of their brains trying,
So I pass — a little time vocal, visible, contrary,
Afterward, a melodious echo, passionately bent for — death making me undying,
The best of me then when no longer visible — for toward that I have been incessantly preparing.

18. What is there more, that I lag and pause, and crouch extended with unshut mouth?
Is there a single final farewell?

19. My songs cease — I abandon them,
From behind the screen where I hid, I advance personally.

20. This is no book,
Who touches this, touches a man,
(Is it night? Are we here alone?)
It is I you hold, and who holds you,
I spring from the pages into your arms — decease calls me forth.

21. O how your fingers drowse me!
Your breath falls around me like dew — your pulse lulls the tympans of my ears,
I feel immerged from head to foot,
Delicious — enough.

22. Enough, O deed impromptu and secret!
Enough, O gliding present! Enough, O summed-up past!

23. Dear friend, whoever you are, here, take this kiss,
I give it especially to you — Do not forget me,
I feel like one who has done his work — I progress on,
The unknown sphere, more real than I dreamed, more direct, darts awakening rays about me — *So long!*
Remember my words — I love you — I depart from materials,
I am as one disembodied, triumphant, dead.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

BACK COUNTRY POEMS. By Sam Walter Foss. Illustrated by Bridgman. Boston: Lee & Shepard. Price, $1.50.

These 122 poems are full of life and various in style, from the polished stanzas of "A Carven Name" to the quaint pathetic dialect of the "Volunteer Organist;" from the rollicking humor of "The Calf on the Lawn" to the grave recognition of "Columbus." But every one of them is genuine and characteristic, like this one on "Walt Whitman:"

Gone has the savor from the salt
With Walt.
An untrained stallion, strong and sure,
He galloped through our literature;
No critic trainer had the grit
To tame him to the bridle bit,
No rein his headlong speed could halt,
Unharnessed Walt!

A man of many a flaw and fault
Was Walt.
He never tried to train his thought
To blossom in a flower pot;
With careless hand he flung his seeds,
And some grew roses, some grew weeds,
And some rich flowers of purple blood
Sprang from the mud.

O'er custom's fence with easy vault
Leaped Walt.
The pedant's gown he would not don,
Nor hold his pen with handcuffs on.
His rhythm, like a fetterless sea,
Broke in mad music and *debris*
Against the boulders of his age
With giant rage.

We shall not find 'neath heaven's vault
Another Walt.
He gave a gift beyond all pelf,
Man's greatest gift—he gave himself.
Then bear, with dead hands on his breast,
This shaggy old man to his rest.
A strong, audacious soul has fled,
Now Walt is dead.

H. B. B.

Woman's Journal, Dec 1, 1894.

L32
1860

NON-CIRCULATING BOOK

OFFICE CASE

L7597
Hutman